

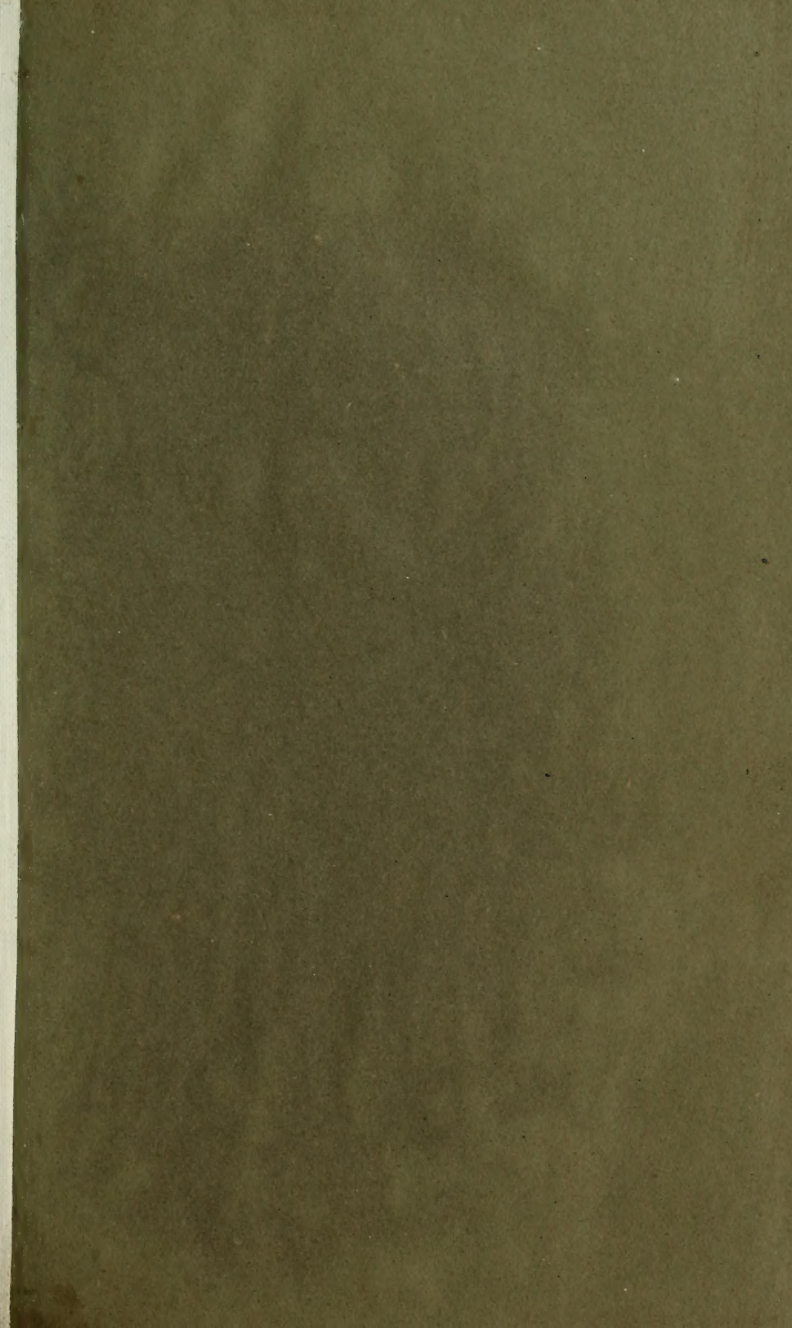
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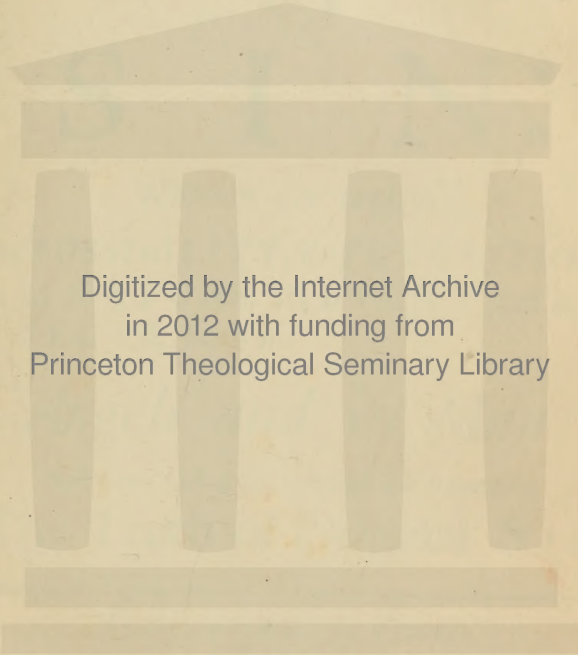


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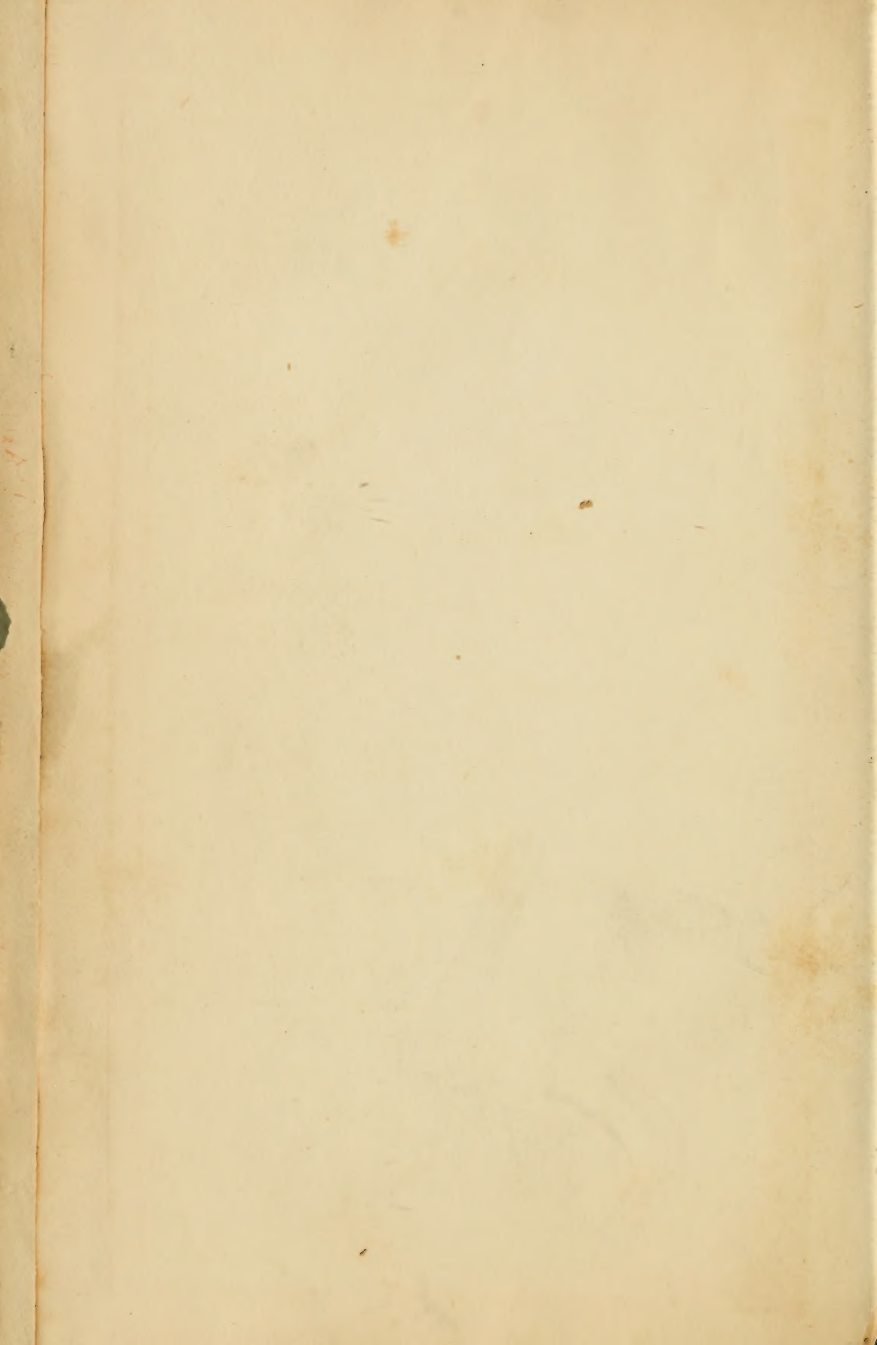
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THE
OECONOMY
OF
SIN:

Wherein are explain'd,
Its POSSIBILITY, its FUTURITION,
its NATURE, its EVENT and EF-
FECTS, both in

Angels and in Man:

And wherein also is demonstrated and maintain'd,
The Truth of Original SIN.

Written originally in French.

By PETER POIRET.

L O N D O N,

Printed for R. Bonwick in St. Paul's Church-yard,
M. Wotton in Fleetstreet, S. Manship and R. Parker
in Cornhill.



THE
OECONOMY
OF
SIN:

Wherein are explain'd,

Its POSSIBILITY, its
FUTURITION, its
NATURE, its EVENT,
and EFFECTS, &c.

THE
OF COMONY

SI N:

is POSSIBILITY, as
FUTURITION, as
NATURE, as EVENT,
and EFFECT, &c.



ADVICE
TO THE
READER;
AND

An IDEA of this Volume.



SHOULD I say that the important Subject of Sin hath been as yet but little inquired into; that its first Foundations have been little search'd; and that the pressing Difficulties, relating to it, made by either the Scrupulous, or Prophane, have been answer'd with a too negligent and cavalierish Air; I believe few Persons of Sense and Judgment would contradict me; and should I add, that I have endeavour'd to satisfy all the Difficulties that
A relate

relate thereto, none would, I presume, censure my Design: Tho' should I affirm I have actually done it, all I believe would accuse me of Presumption: Nor do I so affirm. But as it were ridiculous, and blame worthy to publish Books and execute nothing of One's Design, I may, I think, be allowed to say, that I believe I have, with the Divine Assistance, accomplish'd the Main of my Design. For the truth whereof I appeal to all who have Candour and Capacity to sound and examine Things impartially; I only require of them to read the First Vol. viz. of the Oeconomy of the Creation, or at least the Fifth, Twelfth and Thirteenth Chapters of it; and if after this Treatise, they are still unsatisfy'd; to read the Four First Chapters of the Sixth Vol. which is the Treatise of Universal Providence; and then let 'em judge, if what I have affirmed, of the Execution of my Design, be true.

The Source of whatever Difficulties have embarrassed the mind of Man, who, by endeavouring to explain, have only perplexed these Matters more, is, their not having just Ideas of the Liberty of Man, nor of the Power, Knowledge and Justice of God; nor yet of Sin. They have not considered, that Man, in virtue of his Liberty, is essentially a Principle of free Action, which
whoever

whoever supplies elsewhere, destroys his Nature. The Conduct of Liberty about its Faculties, and the Direction of them, they have confounded with the Conduct it uses about its Objects: Absurdly and improperly supposing that freely to admit an Object (God) operating in us, and to produce or cause its Operation in us, was the same.

They have assigned not only Nothing, but even the Destruction of the Works of God, (Liberty) as an Object of his Power: And because some could not comprehend how God could give Man a Power, whose Acts were not the proper Acts of God; they have attributed all Power and Activity to God, reserving none to Man. Whence sprang the Rigid Predestinarian Doctrine. While others have run into the contrary Extreme, attributing almost every Thing to the Liberty of Man, and confounding with it the Principle and Actings of an Interior Object, even the Illumination and gracious Operations of God himself, whence the Pelagian Heresy arose.

They understood not, that to know Ideas and things different from himself; as also to form them when, and how, and in what Numbers he thought fit, was arbitrary unto God; that Reality was the only Object of his Knowledge; that Sin is an Idea of Resistance to the Will, or ar-

bitrary Divine Conception ; and that, last of all, the Justice of God is not the proper Cause of Privation, Darknefs, Disorder and Trouble. For want of just Notions of which Particulars it was impossible to account for the Event of Sin, and the Difficulties relating to it, which can indeed be explained only by true Notions of the Creatures Liberty, of the Power, Knowledge, and Justice of God ; and also of Sin.

If therefore we desire not to involve our selves in endless Errours and Confusions, we must keep these Principles continually in view and every Thing will be clear and easie : But if we want either Inclination or Capacity to adjust our Notions, our best way will be to leave this, and apply our selves to some other Subject. There are five Things principally treated of in this Volume. The first concerns some preliminary Difficulties, of scrupulous and libertine Persons, relating to the Lability of the Creature, the Possibility and Impossibility of Sin its Idea, Futurition, Permission, and Prevention ; and because these have a natural Connexion with the Power, Extent, and Impartiality of Grace, and the Divine Assistance, I have also given a general Idea of the Primitive Nature and
Method

Method of the Grace of God. This is contained in the six first Chapters. The second proposes to explain the Source of Sin, and general Way of its Commission, Chap. 7. and 8. The third relates to the Conduct of the Angels, and shews how some were confirmed in Beatitude, and others fell into Sin, Chap. 9. and 10. What I have advanced upon this Head is naturally, and necessarily deduced from the Principle of the Communication of Things; of Liberty, and the Nature of Habitues; and must therefore be necessarily true, if we rest in the Substance of Things in the General, and take Care (as I have endeavour'd to do) of determining too nicely the Number, Time, and other Circumstances. The fourth Thing herein consider'd, is the Fall of Man: The Manner, History and Effects of which are explain'd, Chap. 11, 12, 13, and 14.

The fifth is the deplorable Truth of Original Sin, or how all Men fell in Adam; which is here establish'd and defended against all the little Cavils of Pelagian Pride and Blindness, Chap. 14, to the 17th. I have all along been careful to keep in view my first Design of Predestination, and have therefore every where industriously observ'd the Purity, Goodness, Infinite, Universal and Impartial Extent of God's Grace and Mercy,
who

who never will'd the Death of any ; but the Everlasting Happiness of all his Creatures : all these Reflections are recapitulated in the last Chapter of this Volume.

I pray God to make the whole Instrumental to his Glory, and to the Salvation of my fellow Creatures, and accompany it with the inward Operation of his Humbling, Purifying, and Amorous Grace in the Hearts both of them and me. Amen !



THE
OECONOMY
OF THE
Event of SIN.

CHAP. I.

Of the Peccability, or Lability of Man.

- I.  F we compare the present, with ^{I. That the} the original State of Man, well ^{Cause, or} may we ask with the Prophets ^{Occasion of} heretofore, * *How is the faith- Sin is not*
ful City become a Harlot ! It to be
was full of Judgment ; Righteous- sought af-
ness lodged in it ; but now Mur- ter in God,
derers. † How is the Gold become dim ? How is Decrees.
*the fine Gold changed, and the Stones of the San- * Isai. i.*
ctuary poured out in every Street ! The precious Sons 2^d.
of Zion, comparable to fine Gold, how are they e- † Lam. 4.
steem'd as earthen Pitchers, the Works of the Hands
of a Potter ! Whence, alas ! is this so deplorable Dis-
aster, and where shall we find its cursed Cause ? Did
God decree it, or was he in any respect the occa-
sion of it ? This I would never assent to ; tho' I want-
ed Arguments to justify my Abhorrence of it. Was
I indeed the most ignorant Creature living, and
should a Man endeavour to impose this horrid Opi-
nion on me, tho' I wanted Skill to expose the fal-
sity

Chap. I. sity of his Reasoning ; yet rather than submit, I would
 say, Get thee behind me, Satan. For God is Good ;
 and that Man is Wicked, Lying and Deceitful, is to
 *Psal. 5. 4. be imputed solely to himself. * God (as the Psalmist
 speaks) *bath no pleasure in Wickedness, neither shall
 Evil dwell with him.*

But I trust, with the Divine Assistance, that in
 pleading for the Innocence of God, no Argument used
 to support this notorious Falsehood, will stop my
 Mouth ; and had I no other Truths to build upon,
 besides those contained in the foregoing Book, I
 think I might evidently conclude from them, that,
 the Innocence of God does stand so clear, and un-
 tainted, among all the Evils happening in the World,
 that he hath not even the Idea of them, much less is
 he their Cause, either by Production or Decree.

II. That II. They who find fault, that the intelligent Creatures
 'tis absurd were made peccable by Nature, and censure God
 to com- for creating Men and Angels in a fallible State, are
 plain, that guilty of the greatest absurdity in the World. Their
 Man was Schemes are impossible and inconsistent with the
 not im- Nature of such a Creature. On one hand they would
 pecca- still be Men, capable of the Divine Injoyments : On
 ble by Na- the other, they affect Privileges inconsistent with
 ture: That Man's Nature, and peculiar unto God, or to Beasts,
 'tis to ar- or inanimate Creatures. He therefore who would
 rogate to have Man to be impeccable, while he retains the
 our selves Human Nature, desires Man not to be Man, and
 the Cha- affirms what is Absurd and Contradictory, because
 racter to be incapable of sinning, is peculiar only to God,
 of God, to Beasts, or purely inanimate Creatures.

III. That III. It is impossible in all respects for God to Sin,
 God is ab- or to will, decree or establish the Idea or Futurition
 solutely of it ; because, considered in his Eternal Nature, He
 impecca- is the One, Absolute, Independent Being : Before him
 ble, and all things are as nothing : The pure and simple Idea
 cannot of himself is only necessary and essential to him :
 will, de- He Sees and Contemplates himself alone, is Object,
 cree, or Center, End, Light, Happiness, and all Things to
 establish himself, and therefore cannot Sin.

Sm, either
 in Idea or
 Futuriti-
 on.

IV. They who maintain, that the Ideas of Crea-
 tures, and of those Truths which do concern them,
 are Eternal and Independent, do suppose absurdly,
 that God is liable to Sin, and that he would actually
 commit it, by conducting himself toward these Ideas,
 unsuitably to their Natures. This monstrous Conse-
 quence necessarily attends their Doctrine, and can
 only be evaded by asserting the contrary fundamental
 Truth, viz. That God is the only necessary inde-
 pendent Being, and is, by the necessity of his Nature,
 his own Object and Idea; the only source of Light
 and Happiness to himself.

Chap. I.

IV. That they who hold that the Ideas of Things are independent of God, do suppose him capable of Sin.

V. And tho' it pleased God to establish Ideas and
 Truths different from himself, it does not derogate
 from this Great and Capital Truth; because, in the
 first place, God might, if he had pleased, have passed
 them by, and, leaving the Creatures in their natu-
 ral State of Nothing, have remained the One, Great,
 Simple Being; in which Estate as God is perfectly
 Happy and Blessed in himself: So the very possibi-
 lity of Sin is excluded from it. And secondly, when
 God was pleased to conceive Ideas different from
 himself, they were not made or establish'd to his
 Hand; nor had any determin'd Nature or Perfection,
 obliging God to certain Duties to them: These are
 Chimeras of the Schools, the Source of an infinity of
 Errors: God, and his Divine Idea, are the only eternal,
 independent Objects: He necessarily is, and necessari-
 ly Contemplates the Excellencies of his Nature, and
 cannot therefore Sin, by departing from his End, or
 transgressing Laws. And when God was pleased to
 form Arbitrary Representations of himself, for his
 Contemplation and Delight, he imaged forth his Will,
 his End, his Object, i. e. the infinite Perfections of
 the eternal God, who, being the only independent
 Being, necessarily is the Prototype of all things:
 And since God is one, always, and invariably the
 same, he cannot deny himself, but what he establishes
 and decrees, stands fix'd and irreversible: Since God
 does act only by his Will, of which he himself is,
 either in his Essential Nature, or, in the Arbitra-
 ry Representations of it, the only Object: It is

V. God is Impeccable notwithstanding the Arbitrary Establishment of Ideas: Created Spirits invade the Prerogative of God by affecting to be Impeccable.

Chap. I. *plain, by Reasons peculiar and essential unto God, that he cannot Sin : Impeccability is therefore God's peculiar, which whoever pretends to, he invades the Prerogative of God, a Prerogative founded upon his having no other Object besides himself : The Divine Idea absolutely excludes all other Ideas, and consequently God cannot decline there-from, nor propose another End ; nor tend to any other Ideal Light or Happiness.*

VI. He who desires to be Impeccable from another Principle than that of being God, desires to be a Beast, and Sins. VI. If we don't desire to be Impeccable from the foregoing Principle, we then desire to be Beasts: And as the former Principle is Impious and Blasphemous; so this is Brutal, and highly Injurious unto God : That were as if to free ones self from a possibility of Treason, one should affect the Royal Crown and Dignity; whereby we become guilty of the Crime we desire to be incapable of committing : In like manner, he who desires to be God, to become incapable of sinning, affects a privilege peculiar unto God, and actually commits that, which he would be incapable of: It is therefore very absurd to desire to be Impeccable on this Principle: And if, to avoid the absurdity of it, we pretend to desire it from another, we must wish our selves in the State of Beasts: Which is also very absurd and injurious unto God: Hereby we disapprove God's lovely Image, his Knowledge, and Love seated in the Divine Faculties of our Souls, with which because Beasts are not endued, they therefore are incapable of sinning, or of turning their Faculties away from God : They have, 'tis true, an infinite variety of Corporeal Objects, which being not Divine, they cannot Sin; tho' capable they be to vary their Conduct about them a thousand ways; because these are their proper Objects, proportion'd to the Powers of their Nature. So then the Conclusion is, that he who to attain the privilege of Impeccability, would divest himself of the Human Nature, and be content to be a Beast: By this Desire he commits that which he would be incapable of committing: He sins against God, the true Object and Indweller of our Souls.

VII. Besides this I know no other principle by which one can pretend to be Impeccable, except the noble Ambition of becoming a stupid Log; of having no Life or Animal Motion, but what is purely Mechanical: A desire which appears so Injurious unto God, and Inconsistent with the Privilege pretended to, that it is needless to insist on its Absurdity: The very Desire is a direct and formal Sin against God, and 'tis vain to expect relief by a Ridiculous Desire of being Impeccable on Principles like to these.

VIII. It is then impossible for a Created Spirit to be absolutely impeccable? Not to Sin, is, indeed, a desirable perfection, and Men may or rather ought to desire it: But to wish ourselves incapable of committing Sin, is not only to Incapacitate ourselves for the Exercise and proof of Virtue, of the Love of God, and a Thousand Advantages Honourable to both God and Man; but, also, to desire things opposite, absurd and Inconsistent, as has been demonstrated already. Let them who desire privileges to themselves, propose to attain 'em by apt and convenient means. Would a Favourite not be Guilty of Treason against his Sovereign, let him testify his Allegiance by a faithful obedience to him, and not affect the Sovereign Power; or wish himself deprived of Sense, and Reason, or changed into a piece of Senseless matter: Would a Wife be faithful to her Husband's Bed; let her testify her Affection by a voluntary fidelity to him, and not by sitting in a Dungeon and secluding herself from Conversation: Would a Man not Kill or Steal; let him avoid these Sins by a just and sober Conduct, and not deprive himself of the use of his corporeal Members, or shun the sight of the goods of other Men, that he may have no Temptation, or opportunity for Theft or Murder: Would a Philosopher find out the way to square a Circle; let him make use of Study and Application, and not ridiculously wish a Circle to be a Square, which is absurd and contradictory in Nature. No, we must leave things as they are, duly imploy our Faculties about 'em, and not desire the Natures of Things or of our Faculties, altered or destroyed; nor complain of the

Chap. I. Author of our Natures for not giving his Creatures such a Nature and Constitution, that they should be incapable of being abused by us.

IX. *That to complain of our not being Impeccable is a great Teachers and Rabbies.* XI. Poor wretched Creature! Where now is thy Intelligence? Art not thou as yet convinc'd, that except thou be God, or a Beast, or a piece of Senseless matter, it is Impossible for thee to be absolutely Impeccable? And would'st thou be God, to see and contemplate only the Divine perfections? Dost thou wish thy being were extinguish'd, or thyself a portion of Senseless matter, without any Perception of thy own Existence? Or would'st thou be a Brute, deprived of thy Liberty Divine, least thou should'st abuse it? Does a Child that has it in his power to please his Father, wish to be a Dog that he may never offend him? Let's be content with the Nature God hath given us.

* Rom. 9. 20. *Who art thou a Man, that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?* † *Wo unto him, says the Scripture, that saith to his Father, what begettest thou? and to his Mother, what hast thou brought forth?* I say lets be content with the Nature God hath given us, and with the Lot that's fallen to us; especially so admirable, so Blessed, and Divine a Lot, as I have shewn in the foregoing Book ours is; a Lot that shall endure for ever, that as nothing shall be able to rob us of against our will; so we have infinite motives to secure it to ourselves, which we easily may, as appears in the Blessed Angels: A Lot that makes us as Blessed as God himself, and which to perpetuate to us we need only be content with what God has given us, and return him the just tribute of Acknowledgement and Praise.

IX. *And also a Notorious Ingratitude.* X. Do we complain, that God hath given us Opportunity and Engagements to be his Children, his Spouse, Brethren, Sisters, Friends, Favourites, and joint Inheritors of his Glory? Or that we may forfeit these Advantages, and be liable to Punishment by Abuse? Shall we, I ask, complain on these Accounts; when we are notwithstanding under no necessity to abuse the excellent Prerogatives of our Nature; but have infinite Motives to use 'em well, and not the least Temptation to abuse 'em? No let's rather

rather exercise our selves in Praise and Thankfulness, Chap. I.
having infinite Engagements to it.

XI. As to our Faculties, they were given by God XI. Our
to be used, and not abused by us : In giving 'em to Faculties
us he design'd to fill them with Glorious Blessed Ob- and Liber-
jects ; which he presents to their Acceptance : He ty are not
endued us with Liberty, that, by virtue of it, we given us
might injoy this Blessedness, in a spontaneous, active, to Sin
and noble Manner, as is most suitable to the infinite with: Pec-
Excellency of it : If now this Principle of Liberty cability is
fail, in respect either of it self, or of the Faculties and not an E-
Objects about which 'tis conversant ; not he who vil.
formed the Faculties or Objects, or endued us with
this Liberty of Nature is to be blamed, but he who
voluntarily misapplies them ; and therefore it is not
the being Peccable, or the not being absolutely inca-
pable of Sin ; but the voluntary abuse and misapply-
ing the Powers that God has given us, and the Ob-
jects he presents unto us, that is really Evil.

XII. Our being Peccable is not the occasion of our XII. Our
Sinning, much less is it the Cause thereof. For this Peccabili-
Peccability is not ordered, establish'd, or decreed by ty is not
God, but is an Imperfection founded on the Nothing- the occasi-
ness Essential unto Creatures. Whatever Being is on of our
not Supreme, may be without, or separated from it ; sinning :
especially if we suppose its Union with it to depend Nor is this
upon its own free Choice. That Man is Peccable does Peccabili-
therefore not come from God, or from his Constitu- ty from
tion ; but is Essential to his Nature, which necessa- God, but
rily partakes of Nothing, as he is not the Supreme founded
All-perfect Being : And as the Nothingness of Man on the
is not from God, nor founded on his Decree ; as Nothing-
God needed not to decree that Man should be natu- ness of
rally Nothing, (because he is so in his first Prin- Man.
ciple :) So neither is his Lability from God, nor did
God decree it, in order to make him Labile : It is
as Essential to him to be Labile, as it is to be a
Creature, or as not to be his own Light and
Happinefs.

Our Lability is founded on the Nothingness of our
Nature, and every thing naturally partakes thereof,
besides God, or Brutes, and inanimate Creatures.

Chap. I. XIII. Some Persons, after all, will be apt to say, No reasoning will convince us, that it were not better to be incapable of Sinning: Were it not better never to have been, than to be liable to Eternal Misery? Why was I created of a Frail and Labile Nature? Why did God set before me an infinity of Objects; and not rather confine me to himself? Why, why, alas! must I be free, to be liable to Eternal Misery?

Objections that some Men make against their being created Free and Labile: That these Objections are absurd and somewhat like the Blasphemies of the Damn'd.

Passionate Complaints like these some fly into, tho' very absurd they be, and only argue an ignorant, wicked Mind, ready and disposed to impute to God the Malice and Perverseness of their own Hearts: The sinfulness of which Procedure a parallel Supposition will sufficiently expose: Should a Man who, from a low Estate, was promoted to the Royal Favour, introduced into his Princely Palace, and adopted as his Son and Heir: Should such a one forget his Princely Benefactor, and Trait'rously conspire to rob him of his Imperial Crown; and when condemn'd of Treason, think to excuse himself by Complaints like these: Why was I rais'd from my low Estate? Why introduc'd into the Royal Palace, and distinguish'd by Princely Favours, intrusted in Affairs of State, and adopted Heir of the Crown? Had I not been rais'd from my original Meanness, I had not been guilty of Treason, as I am: And so go on, basely to impute his vile Treason to his Prince's Favours: Or should a Thief excuse his Theft or Murder, by reflecting ungratefully upon God, for giving him Life and Strength; or his Parents, for their care to breed him up.

Should a Wife extenuate her infidelity to her Husband's Bed, by complaining that she had not been kept bound in Irons, or secluded from Human converse. Or Lastly, should a Philosopher find fault with God for not making a Circle to be squared, to save him all that time and study and thought, which it cost him to find out the Quadrature of a Circle. How very absurd, wicked, and ungrateful would be these Mens Complaints? So, and much more impious, and absurd, are they, who are angry with God for making 'em Free and Labile: Were Men indeed with

a little

a little Piety, or even with common Sense, they would be ashamed of such Ridiculous Complaints: Was the Love of God seated in Mens Hearts, or had they tasted the Heavenly Delights they would not, could not, make Complaints like these: No, Praise and Thanksgiving unto God for his gracious Bounty, and for all the Advantages they enjoy, would be their everlasting Exercise: To curse their Being, and their Faculties; to censure God, and even curse him for them, is the Imployment of damn'd Souls: And tho' the Persons I have been speaking of, do not run into their execrable Excesses; yet by being angry at the Being, Faculties and Constitution, that God hath given them, they tend and advance thereto: But because some perhaps may be guilty of this Sin thro' Ignorance and Infirmary, I will, for the sake of such, endeavour to give more solid Satisfaction to these and other of their Complaints.

XIV. In the first place then I say that Lability, considered in it self, is not an Evil; but only a necessary Consequent of our Nothingness, and is in it self, and in God's Design, a means of Virtue and Reward to Man, God having on his part never given the least occasion to our Fall.

XIV. Particular Answers to these Objections. Lability is

an Occasion not of Evil, but of Good to Man.

XV. Nor, secondly, is Not being preferable to a State wherein we are liable to Eternal Misery; supposing we may easily avoid this Danger, and become eternally happy as God himself; and especially supposing, we are already actually invested in this happy State, and shall be eternally fix'd therein, past all possibility of a Lapse, after a short time of Trial, as was the Case of our first Parents.

XV. It is not better not to be at all, than to be Labile.

XVI. Thirdly, I say, that Divine and Corporeal Faculties are Essential unto Man: If we deprive him of the former, we degrade him from the Human, to a Brute or Inanimate Nature: if of the latter, we unqualifie him for the Dominion and Government of the World, that was committed to him.

XVI. That Divine and Corporeal Faculties are Essential unto Man.

XVII.

Chap. I.

XVII. The Idea or Perception of God, of our selves, and of the World, are also Necessary and Essential to him.

XVII. Fourthly, I add, that supposing Man to be plac'd between God, the Supreme, Independent, Self-sufficient Being, and Brute, Inanimate Creatures. He will necessarily have the Idea or Perception of several Objects: As first, of God, and that in a more noble Sense than what we understand by the Rational Idea of him; because God is the Fountain of his Being. He is his Light, his Happiness and End: And secondly of himself; because otherwise we suppose him of a Brute Inanimate Nature: Every created Spirit is therefore naturally plac'd between two Objects, the Creator and it self, with Power to proportion its Application to them, more, or less: And if we consider further, that Man was created to govern the Material World, it will be also Necessary and Essential to him to have the Idea of it: So that Man, we see, is naturally plac'd between three Objects all Essential to, and inseparable from him; from whence we may discover the Radical and Essential Ground of our Lability, according as we apply the Divine Faculties of our Souls to God, our selves, or the Material World, more or less than their Nature does require: But by the way it deserves to be noted by us, that the Material World, subjected to Man's Dominion, does not increase, as one may imagine, but lessen the danger of a Lapse: He who disapplies his Faculties from God, and fixes on the Creatures, falls not so dangerously, as he who fixes upon himself, as will be proved hereafter, and as hath been already verified in the fall of Men and Angels.

XVIII.

That Liberty is Essential unto Man, and includes Lability in the Idea of it.

** Oecon. of the Creation, Chap. 17.*

XVIII. Fifthly, I add that if Man be not a brute Machine, he must have liberty of Conduct, as has been sufficiently demonstrated in the place cited in the * Margin, to which I refer my Reader for ample Satisfaction: And if the Soul be essentially free, it is not limited in the manner and degree of its Application to the Objects about which 'tis conversant, but has power to vary, proportion and divide it as it pleases; it may exceed or come short of what the Order and Reason of Things requires; the present Mode of its Subsistence in Man is derived from Nothing,

thing, of which its Conduct may partake, and be Chap. II.
unworthy of it, considered, as derived from God. 

C H A P. II.

If Man, tho' naturally free and labile, might not have been Establish'd and confirmed by the Grace of God, so as to be incapable actually to fall. Of Grace, and the Dispensation of it.

I.  U T it may be further ask'd; I. *That* Might not the force of Liberty, *the Divine Li-* Essential unto God, have so held *erty and* in, accompany'd, confirmed and *Force* strengthened the Liberty of Man, *could not* as to preserve him from a Fall: I *prevent* Answer, Yes, it had actually been *Man's fall,* so, had the Liberty of Man consented and resigned it- *without* self unto God's Government and Direction; but with- *his own* out this absolute Resignation, it was Impossible: For *Consent* Liberty is an Absolute Gift of God, given freely to *and Co-* act and to direct itself, and by this noble way of act- *peration* ing, to become more acceptable unto God, and more *Establish-* worthy of his Love and Favour: And if Man perform *ment of* the Condition required of him, *viz.* freely yield up *Liberty.* his Liberty to God; then God accepts it; not that Man ceases to be Free, but God Accompanies, and Co-operates with it, in a Friendly manner, conducting it by his Counsel and Wisdom. Whereupon Mans Liberty, Sensible of its happiness in the Heavenly Manuduction, resigns itself more and more; it says with David, *I am alway by thee, thou hast holden me by my right Hand; thou shalt guide me with thy Counsel, and after that receive me into thy Glory. Draw me, and I will run after thee:* With which Resignation on the part of Man, God do's not fail to correspond; nor the Soul to renew its Resignation;
till

Chap. II. *till this Mutual Correspondence of God and Man at last concludes in a firm, settled, resolute habit of Resignation: Whereupon God establishes and confirms the force of his Divine Liberty in it: And this is what we are to understand by our Liberty, its being established in Grace, or in Gods free and Gracious Guidance; because here all danger of falling from God is past.*

II *That God do's not act in a free Creature by a force that determines irresistibly, but only in proportion as Liberty resigns it-self.*

II. We are not to understand hereby that God displays his Almighty Power upon a frail feeble Faculty, not yet habitually resigned to him, in turning it irresistibly against its Inclinations: This is not consistent with the Nature of Liberty, which is hereby supposed to act, from a Principle different from itself, viz. by force: Let who will, deceive themselves; let them stand Idle and unconcerned, vainly expecting that God will act in them, without any Indevour or research of theirs; but let them know withal that God will not, cannot do it: The infinitely Holy cannot cooperate with, or contribute to Idleness Indulged, or any Sins of Man: In Infinite Love he hath created us to be Free, and is graciously pleased to act in, and with us, as our Liberty admits him: If we voluntarily give up ourselves to Gods Government and Direction; He then Vouchsafes to act in and with us; but if, instead hereof, we pursue our own ways, and follow the Counsel of our Hearts, God leaves us to ourselves, withdrawing from us the Inferiour Assistance of his Gracious Spirit.

III *What is meant by that Will or Good pleasure of God where by he gives Grace unto or hardens whom he pleases.*

III. And thus we are to understand those Scriptures, wherein God is said to give Grace unto, and to harden whom he pleases, viz. That he leaves Men to harden and confirm themselves, in the state in which they are, by virtue of that Free and Self-establishing Power, with which they are indued: Gods Will is not a fantastic Will, to act by Caprice, in different Manners, towards Subjects qualify'd and disposed alike, as we unjust and perverse Creatures, are apt to do towards one another; but 'tis his Decree, or Will to act in Man, in proportion as he resigns himself to him: And who shall contend with, or prescribe to God. Ply, Ply, we must or Perish: Shall we, Fantastic Creatures, form

form Rules and Decrees of our own Invention, and Chap. II. prescribe them to God, as Laws by which to regulate himself in dispensing his Graces to us, in confirming us in them, and withdrawing them from us? Since God hath given us Faculties, Objects, and Power to exercise our Faculties about them; He will hereafter establish us in his Grace, or withdraw it from us, as he sees us corresponding with it: If we turn toward God, he gives more Grace and Divine Assistance: If we forsake him, we become hardened and Impenitent. Which Conduct the Psalmist do's well Describe, * *With the Merciful thou wilt shew thyself Merciful,* * Pl. 18. *with an Upright Man, thou wilt shew thyself Upright:* v. 26, 27. *With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure, and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward.*

And this is God's Absolute Decree: He hath irrevocably resolved, without any Exception or respect of Persons, To act in Man, to Establish and Confirm him in his Grace, in such Proportion only, as Man shall freely resign and abandon himself to God: Thus God do's act because 'tis his good Pleasure: Which good Pleasure, to give his Grace, and to Confirm us in it, in Proportion only as we Consent, Indebour, and Resign ourselves, shall stand for ever and be accomplish'd. His Will and good Pleasure is to have us Free: He pass'd the Decree without our Counsel; even before he spake us into Being: His Wisdom was with him, and counsell'd him to form us free acting Creatures, and to act in and with us according as we correspond or resign ourselves: and shall we contest with our Creatour, shall we foolishly censure the Equity and Goodness of this Decree.

IV. But some may object: If it be not in our Power to alter the Decree of God, nor to enjoy his Grace at Pleasure; why then do's God complain that his Influences fail us, and we are not confirm'd in Grace? Why hath God made us to act freely, and not rather Will'd that his Grace should be Inseparable from us, and we confirmed in it, whatever use we make thereof: In Answer to these, I Answer with St. Paul.

* *Nay, but O Man, who art thou that replyest unto* * Rom. 9. *God?* 20.

Chap. II. *God? Shall the thing form'd say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus?*

Tho' I might moreover add, that the Rule or Method of our being confirmed in Grace, is not merely Arbitrary; but founded upon the Nature of God himself, and his ways of acting conformably to himself: and that besides the Patience and Longsuffering of God always allows his Creatures sufficient time to deliberate and consider, if they will be assisted and confirmed in his Grace, in that way and Method his Wisdom hath decreed.

Here it may be thought, that that Grace of God, and Estate of Man, which were before the fall, are by me confounded with that Grace, and that Estate which were Subsequent thereto, because the Objections made, and the Answers given to 'em, are express in terms used by the Apostle when he treated of the State of things Subsequent to Sins Commission: This I Acknowledge to be true; but then I say, that the Method of Gods proceeding before the Fall, is liable to the same Objections, and therefore the same Expressions are proper to be apply'd to both, as serving as well, to solve the Difficulties relating to the Conduct of God and Man before the Fall, as to explain the Answer given by *St. Paul* concerning a Parallel Difficulty Subsequent unto it: However different these things appear; they have one common way or Method, and are in Substance the self-same Thing; and whatever difference we suppose between the Grace of God, and Estate of Man before and after the Fall; it is still in Substance the same Grace of God, Christ acting by its Power and Luminous Charity, after a way, the same in Substance: And the Faculties of Man are likewise the same in Substance: And therefore these things, being the same in their inward and Essential Ground and Nature, they act in the same Way or Method, and whatever change do happen, it only concerns the external means, which, the Grace of God, renewed after Sin, varies according as it finds us Embarrass'd: But this is not the place to treat of the Renewing of Gods Grace; nor of its different methods; tho' it may not be

be Improper to give a general Idea of its way of Acting. Chap. II.

V. Now in order to discover the reason of Gods way of Acting, (*viz.*) of his Decree and Will, 'tis requisite to consider his Essence, and its Essential Properties, which are their Radical Foundation.

V. The Nature and Essential Reasons of the

Strength and Constancy of Created Beings are founded upon the Consideration of God Himself.

It is a Property of God to be.

It is a Property of Being to continue, dure, and persevere in its Being, and in its Modes of Being.

It is a Property of Being to be Active, and to act according to its Nature.

It is a Property of Active Being to continue and persevere to be an Active Being, to strengthen and confirm itself in Being, and Activity according to its Nature.

It is last of all a property of God to correspond with his Being and ways of acting, and not to deny or contradict em.

I know none more profound and solid Truths than these, in pursuance of which I say, That if God give Being to any Creature, he will not, cannot deny himself of Essential ways of acting: His Production must be Representative of himself, *i. e.* must be, and persevere to be, to act, and confirm itself in Being and in the Power and Perfections Essential to it: As every thing in God, so every work of his naturally tends to be, and to be fruitful, and to reproduce itself and confirm itself in Being: The Faculties of the Soul and their ways of acting, they tend to persevere in Being, and confirm themselves in acting according to their Nature, and when these ways of acting are repeated; they strengthen and confirm their modal Being: For every act is a redoubling of the Preceding Action, and, absolutely speaking, no act is lost, but strengthens and confirms the Being, whose act it is, in its modal State, *i. e.* in the degree of Perfection which it possesses: This is the settled constant way of Nature: Being, and Modes of Being, all of them, tend, in a most uniform and simple Manner, to persevere and

Chap. II. and reproduce themselves in their present State and powers: This rule is the Essential Ground of Nature: Thus all our Faculties, thus Liberty, its Activity, Power, and Self-direction tend to dure and reproduce themselves, and the more they are repeated, the more strong and forcible they become; repeated Acts being as it were a Reproduction of Things and of their Modes, which hereby are multiply'd to infinity, and also grow strong and firm, not to be chang'd or broke by a single Act that is contrary thereto.

VI. Reasons of the strength and weakness of Habitudes. Of the moral easiness or Difficulty, possibility and impossibility in good and evil.

VI. And this is well to be observed by us; because in this Method, God do's constantly proceed and act in all things; whether Beings, or their Modes: and this way of acting is the Foundation, or Root of Habits, and the Cause, or Reason, of their strength and weakness; why some things are, in a moral sense, easy or difficult, possible or impossible to be changed: It is morally impossible for a way of acting repeated a thousand times; or an Inclination amplify'd with an Infinite number of free Acts, and every of them tending to dure, and reproduce itself, should be changed, or extinguish'd, by a single Act of a contrary nature: This fancy would be as absurd, as to think to break a great Bar of Iron with a little Rod: Naturally Speaking, an Inclination can't be altered, without, not only as many, but stronger and more forcible Acts, than the contrary habit was contracted by: In opposites the stronger will prevail and be Victorious.

This opens a Theory for many useful Truths, which he who hath Inclination may particularly deduce, while I content myself, to shew hereby, why He who is habitually good, can't easily be perverted, and why he, who is not really such, finds it so difficult to become so: Why, *the Gate is strait, and the way Thorny: Why men must do Violence to themselves to change their Habits: Why they who waver between good and evil become indifferent, sluggish, unmoveable, hard; insensible, and, if they fix on Evil, are hardened in it.* The method or way of acting which nature observes, and is, as I said before, the Root of Nature, is the same in Evil as well as Virtuous Actions. Both good and evil are durable in their nature, and tend to reproduce

produce themselves : Good directly, and by it self: Chap. II. Evil for want of Reality and Perfection. For Evil is not a real Being, but an undue Act or Application of such a Being, towards an imperfect Subject, which nevertheless do tend to reproduce Subjects and Acts cloath'd with their own Defects and Imperfections : Herein consists the formality of Evil : And as to Liberty, infinite as it is, it participates of this Rule, in the whole Extent of its Being, and its Conduct. For, this Great Universal Rule, viz. That BEINGS and their Modes are durable and reproductive, is indeed no other than the Virtue or Power of God, acting and influencing thro' the vast extent of Being, and its Modes : It is the Power of all Nature, Created and Divine : We must not therefore think, that things and ways of acting in God and Nature will admit so easie an Alteration as we imagine. It hath pleased God to establish Ideas and Beings different from himself ; but every thing is Representative of him, it is founded in him and upon him, and Acts in a way conformable to its Origin, *i. e.* in a durable productive manner.

VII. Now, from hence we may understand, how VII. *How* God confirms some, and hardens others : He hardens, *we are to* in that the natural tendency of things, to dure, and reproduce themselves, is derived and out-flowed from *under-* him : It is his Power influencing his Creatures, and *stand those* if that Power be in a Subject, which voluntarily applies it self to unworthy Objects, it incites it to re- *Texts of* produce it self, and to continue in its State, and there- *Scripture,* by hardens and confirms it in it. In like manner, if *in which* Liberty misapply it self, that Divine Power, in virtue *God is said* of which every thing tends to be, to dure and to re- *to harden,* produce it self, will strengthen and confirm it in that *to do Evil,* Conduct which it freely chuses : It is very plain, *to make* that things must of necessity be thus, because this *quell the* tendency to confirm our selves in the State in which *Heart, to* we are, is a Property of Being, founded on God *be angry,* himself : The contrary Supposition makes God not *to punish,* only to disapprove Being, but also makes things to *&c. Things* tend toward Not-Being, which is impossible in all *are not* Respects : And this is the properest Sense in which *changed* *in the way* *that some* *imagine.*

Chap II. I can understand those Texts of Scripture which say, *That God hardens, that he doth Evil, dulls the Heart, stops the Ears, blinds the Eyes, viz.* That that Power of Being, and of Acting, which God hath given to his Creatures, and which is Originally his, doth tend to continue and act in, and according to that State in which it is: So that if God indue a Creature with Liberty to conduct it self, and determine its own Actions, towards Objects infinitely perfect, and, instead hereof, it apply it self to mean and imperfect ones. The Power of God, imparted to the Creatures, will fix and confirm it in its State, whether more or less real: And herein the Divine Innocence, Justice, Purity, &c. will be untainted, whatever happen, the Creature being plac'd at first in a state of perfect Freedom. If, on the contrary, it uses its Liberty as it ought, the Power of God becomes not only strong and durable, but luminous and vivid, in virtue of its union with the Light and Life of God, from which if it afterwards departs, the same Divine Power and Virtue is in it a source of eternal Death, of Darkness, and devouring Fire. On which account the Scriptures call the Divine Power which, in the Good, is the Foundation of Eternal Life and Happiness: In Sinners, the Wrath of God, and the Fire that is not quench'd: And this is the unchangeable Foundation of the State of Beings, with which it is Man's Duty to comply, and expect the Consequences of his Choice, without reflecting foolishly on God. * *Fury is not in me: Who would set the Briars and Thorns (offensive Objects) against me in Battle? Would he break thro' my Power! (would he change that Power out-flowed from me upon all Beings) Let him make Peace with me. Let him make Peace with me: Let him yield to God, that his Power may establish and confirm him in Light and in Life.*

* Ifai 27.
4, 5.

*Sic ignis Aternus Deus;
Nam Christus ignis verus est:
Is ipse complet Lumine
Justos, & urit noxios:*

For

For this Divine Power, in virtue whereof all sort of Beings do tend to dure, and act, is a Fire that burns for ever : If it finds an Unctuous Matter, it makes it shine forth resplendent : If Dirt it makes it hard, and burns and devours it self for ever, increasing in fiery Torment, according to the establish'd and unchangeable Property of Beings : Let therefore free Creatures look to themselves, and to their Conduct.

VIII. Now hence it is manifest to all who do not wilfully shut their Eyes, (which if Men resolve to do I know no remedy) that Man, considered in his original State and Constitution, could not be established in Grace, beyond all possibility of falling, as some do very unjustly and ridiculously require : Before we can attain this happy State, certain Conditions are indispensibly requir'd, as

1st. That the free Creature should act freely, according to its Nature, determining its Act and Conduct freely.

2ly. That its Act and Self-Determination be frequently repeated.

3ly. That it continue sometime acting in this manner, with Fidelity and Constancy, not wavering on both sides, nor building and pulling down.

These three Conditions are indispensibly required on the part of Man, before he can pretend to the Grace of Correspondence, to an increase of Graces, or an Accomplishment of Strength and Blessing, which are dispens'd, and given of God, by most just and admirable Rules worthy of his infinite Wisdom.

IX. As in the Divine Nature, God does correspond unto himself, and his own Acts, by the Luminous presence of his Son, and by the Love of his Spirit ; so likewise he corresponds with his Creatures Acts, when turned toward the Word of God, and the Holy Spirit : No sooner do we actually turn ourselves to God, but he corresponds therewith, by a gracious Effusion of his Light and Love, by a sort of Divine Congruity and Equity. This is the Grace of God, in its first Communication and Admission ; and the Creatures Acts, thus impregnated with the Light and Love of God, become more Real, Perfect, Strong,

Chap. II.

VIII. That it was impossible for a Creature endued with Liberty to be originally incapable of falling. How the State of Establishment in Grace and Union with God is to be attained.

IX. How God's Grace is at first communicated and augmented to his Creatures: Divine Benediction.

Chap II Durable, and Self-producing than before. 2dly, God, in his Grace and Love, accompanies the Creatures free Application to him, with the Assistance of his Spirit, whereby the Creature is more influenced, invigorated, strengthened, and the ways of Righteousness made more plain and easie; and this is call'd, *The Augmentation of New Grace, or the Pure Benediction Divine.*

X. How X. And when the Creature renews his Acts, and is God redoubles his Graces, and makes 'em habitual to the Creatures, and his ways broad and easie. X. And when the Creature renews his Acts, and is habituated in them, God corresponds by the Emanations of his Light and Love, and this Correspondence between God and his Creature becomes more strong and real, and more strongly tend to reproduce their Acts. And, secondly, God on his part, renews his gracious Blessings, dispensing them freely to his Creatures; and so, by laying one Stone upon another, the building of Salvation is gradually raised to Perfection. God corresponds, by an increase of Grace, with the Creatures Habitudes, which, by renewed Acts, are strengthened and confirmed, and the ways of God become wide and pleasant to the Soul.

XI. How XI. And when, in fine, the Creature hath perfected faithfully to correspond with God, during a certain time; God blesses and co-operates with it, in a manner worthy an infinite and eternal God, *i. e.* forever. Then God seizes the whole Man, absorbs him in his Divinity; and Man having overcome, receives the incorruptible Crown, and may sing the Hymn of Victory and Triumph.

XII. God's XII. And if, last of all, the Creature hath lived last Establisht among tempting Objects, (as is the State of Man since Sin) among which there is continual danger of being depraved, God will, to secure him from all danger of a Lapse, and to accomplish his Salvation, when the Creature hath sufficiently approv'd its Fidelity to God by Manfully resisting these Temptations. God will, I say, totally exterminate and remove 'em, and so put an end to Fear, and to Labilitie it self.

XIII. Of XIII. But when, I say, that God, by his Light, corresponds with the Creatures Acts, I do not mean, that the Creatures Research or Act must or does precede all Grace.

Grace of God : We ought carefully to distinguish Chap. II. the offer of Grace, from its Admission, Establishment, and effective Operation in us; which are always consequent to the Creatures Act; tho' the offer of Grace is antecedent to it : God prevents his Creatures, by Lights, Allurements, Awakenings and Excitements, to dispose them to Act and Determine well; he doth not force them irresistibly; but exhorts 'em to Will and Act, offering to strengthen their Natural Powers, by the Assistance of his powerful Grace : And it is either with respect to this Concomitant or Assisting Grace, or of God's preventing Calls, that, we sometimes say, God makes his Creatures to will and do, or else because our power, to Will, and Do, is originally from God. But because it is left to our disposal, we oftner say, that Man Wills and Acts, than God : Tho', in one sense, God is properly and truly said to make us to Will and Do, *i. e.* when we resign our selves to his Direction, and more perfectly when we shall be absorpt in him : But this is not to be reckon'd amongst God's preventing Graces.

One thing which well deserves our Note, is, That when we are not dispos'd to, make a good Use of the Divine exciting Graces, God often withdraws 'em from us, because the continued offer of them would harden us more and more, aggravate our Guilt, render our Condition more desperate and incurable, and be Instrumental to extinguish the Noble, Generous and Disinterested Love of God, and fill our Hearts with a corrupt Love of Self, and our own Sensations.

XIV. The Necessary and Arbitrary degrees of Nature and of Grace, thro' which a Man must pass, to be perfectly establish'd, I conceive to be as follows: *XIV. The Gradati-*

1. There is the preventing Grace of God, consisting in an offer of Divine Lights, in Awakenings, and Allurements, and in presenting to the Creature proper Occasions, Subjects, Objects, Impressions, Sentiments. *Method observed in the Dispensations of Grace.*

2. There is the actual Correspondence, or first Co-operation of the Creature.

Chap. II.

3. The interior operative Grace of God; his Light and Love subsequent to the Creatures Act (which is Concomitant Grace.)

4. A new and free Act of God, a new (or increase of) Grace: Pure Blessing, (which one may call a Correspondence of God's free and gracious Goodness, because it is given by Correspondence, and we should not want a suitable reward, tho' God did not give it to us.)

5. The tendency of the Creatures Act, of God's interior Grace, and of the new Grace, to dure and reproduce themselves.

6. The regular and orderly Reproduction of these things, or the mutual Fidelity of God and Man.

7. The habitual Strength of Man, and God's habitual Grace and Benediction corresponding with it, viz. the Gifts of the Holy Spirit.

8. The course of this Fidelity, accompany'd with the Divine Assistance, or final Perseverance.

9. The Divine Correspondence with this Fidelity, which is the final Accomplishment, and perfect Establishment of the Creature.

10. The Extermination or Removal of all Tempting and Distracting Objects, and our Admission to, or Injoyment of every Thing, that safely and infallibly leads to God (which is, if I may use the term in a Sense different from the Schools) the Victorious or Crowning Grace. The Gift of everlasting Life, consummated by the presence of God Incarnate, whose visible Glory shall preserve us ever after from all danger of Distraction. Thus Man, tho' naturally Labile, becomes by the preventing Grace of God, by free Act and Habit, by persevering Fidelity, by Grace, by actual and habitual Benediction, by Divine Victory and a Crown of Grace incapable of Sinning: And by these Degrees Men should propose the Attainment of this Blessed State, and not ridiculously desire it by a way that infringes all Rules and Methods of acting, both Natural and Divine.

XV. The
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XV. He who would form a Judgment of these Matters, is requested to consider 'em, with Attention, and Procedure observed before, and since the Fall, in Good and Evil.

in

in their first Source and Principles, as they are here deduced : They are not only founded on eternal and immutable Truths, but are also fruitful of Truths that issue from them; and such as for their Usefulness I may recommend, I hope, without Offence: Now this Method of Procedure will remain unchangeably the same, whether Man retain his Integrity, or not; whether before a fall, or after; if a Design of a Re-establishment do take place; only that Method or Procedure which is subsequent to the Fall, will be the REDEEMER's Grace; whereas that which was antecedent to it, was the Creator's; and in the REDEEMER's Dispensation Grace will exceedingly abound, above what it does in the Method I am speaking of; by reason of the Excess of Sin.

The Method of the growth and increase of Sin, is pretty near the same, and by like Measure and Proportion, tho' not directly, or from a principle of Virtue or Power belonging to it, but from the absence, or for want of it. A particular Deduction of these Matters would be too great a Digression here; it will fall in properly hereafter, and is besides an easie useful Exercise for such as are dispos'd.

XVI. I will only add a Remark or two concerning the Re-establishment, supposing Man to fall, and God to resume the design of raising him. 1st. God will prevent him by the renewed offer of Objects, Motives, Excitements and Impressions suitable to his State and Exigence. 2dly. Man must interpose his Act, and turn his Faculties towards such Objects as God does graciously propose and incline him to: And here the great Difficulty lies: Before the Fall, there were no Contrarieties of Nature to be surmounted; whereas since its Event there are strong and inveterate Habits acquired by Acts infinitely repeated, directly opposite to the new Turn which we must take: Our perverse Conduct is harden'd as a Rock, tending continually to strengthen, confirm, and reproduce it self; And how shall one single Act oppose a Habit confirmed by a Million? Indeed, naturally speaking, it is impossible it should prevail: But we must endeavour whatever is the Event: With-

XVI. An
Idea of
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of a Lapse,
and a Re-
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Chap. II. out co-operating with the Grace, it is absolutely impossible to enjoy it; because to co-operate with, is to admit; and to enjoy it without admitting it, is contradictory and absurd: This shews that naturally speaking it is impossible to heal our evil Acts and Habits, otherwise than by Acts and Habits contrary thereto. But, whatever Success we meet with, or Difficulties we encounter; or whatever Discouragements of Impossibility or Impotence may be suggested, 'tis of absolute necessity to Resolve, and actually to Fight, otherwise we are irreparably Lost: To hope without this to escape Perdition, is a terrible Self-delusion; it is to devote ones self to certain and irreparable Ruin: But tho' a single Act be weak and impotent to oppose contrary inveterate Habits, we must not be discourag'd acting: For this new and single Act, (to say nothing of that Humility, Knowledge of our selves, and humble recourse to a superiour Being for Assistance, with the like good Dispositions, which the sense of our Impotence naturally produces,) tho' Weak and Impotent, is not altogether vain and useles; but tends to dure and reproduce it self; and if repeated, this tendency increases more and more, and the Grace of God is secretly Concomitant and Corresponding with it. It is true indeed, the Opposition we meet, is stronger than any Act of ours, and the weaker must submit, and yield it self as conquer'd, did not the Divine Grace and Benediction seasonably come to our Relief; and if we faithfully co-operate with it; if we persevere and knock at the Door of Grace, during a sufficient time of Trial; or if, having persever'd but a little space, we repose our selves on God, with a lively, active Faith; so great, immense and powerful is his Grace, and so exuberant his Blessing, that, however weak and impotent Nature be, we sometime receive such Strength and Assistance from above, as enables us, by a single Act, to overcome, at once, Mountains of Difficulties, as was exemplified in *Mary Magdalen*, and others, in the Primitive Ages, who, in a moment, from great notorious Sinners, were changed into eminent Saints. In these rare Examples

God does proportion the Dispensation of his Grace, Chap. II. to the Strength, the Fulness and Generosity of our Act, and of our Resolution, with the Divine Assistance, to mortifie our Corruption, and live to God for ever after.

XVII. This is not a proper place to deduce these things more particularly: Let it suffice, that I have explained their general Principles and Reasons, which we are too apt to lose the Ideas of, unless we frequently review 'em: For want of this, the Ideas of Truth are weak and languid, in them, who want Attention to trace 'em up to the Fountain Head, and to consider their Connection and Agreement, with the first Original Truth: And since nothing gives to Truth a greater Force and Lustre, or is more useful to us, than thus to Contemplate it in its Source, I hope my Reader will not blame me, if for the sake of these Advantages; I have chosen to follow Nature by a useful inartificial Method, rather than Act by a learned and barren one, and advanced some things too soon for the Schools of Art, whose Rules I can easily transgress, when too strict an Observation of 'em does only weaken the force of Truth, and keep its Rays from springing.



C H A P. III.

Of Preventing, Sufficient, Efficacious and Persevering Grace. That the Event of Sin was not for want of any of these : That these Graces were really and truly given by God, tho' not in that Chimerical Sense in which we usually understand them.

I. A Solution of three Difficulties relating to the Fall of Man: That its Event was not for want of Preventing Grace, or of its increase: Nor by the Divine Permission or Decree.



ONE, that does well consider and understand the foregoing Truths, will, I hope, hereafter be guilty of such absurd Complaints as these. Why did not God establish in Grace, his Labile Creatures, at their Creation? But there are

some who run into more violent Complaints, whose Satisfaction there is more reason to endeavour; because, what thro' Temptation of the Devil, thro' Ignorance and Frailty, some, even Good and Pious Men, are often disturbed by them; and are ready to complain, (1.) That, that Grace of God, without which we cannot persevere, nor do any thing that is Good, and by which we are effectually drawn, and made to persevere, was not given to Man; because, God who is in no wise obliged to give it to us, and who gives it to whom he pleases, was not pleased to give it. (2.) Others pretend, that Preventing Grace, or at least such an increase of it (*viz.* of Movements, Excitings, Delectations, and other Attractions and Occasions) as might have hindered the Fall of Man, were not vouchsaf'd to him by God. (3.) And lastly, others say, that Sin was permitted and decreed. Which Opinions, concerning the Grace of God, are a source of manifold Scruples to Well-meaning Persons, and of Complaint and Murmuring to the Ill-dispos'd. But, with the Divine Assistance, I hope to shew that they are full of Darknesh and of Error; and that God hath not refused

used to the Sinner his Preventing, Efficacious, or Persevering Graces : But that Sin is the pure Effect of the Sinners own Decree and Will ; and that they who maintain the contrary, ascribing it to the Divine Permission or Decree, frame their Notions of that Decree from the Humorous Capricious ways of us depraved Creatures, and not from the Idea of a Being Independent, infinitely Wise, Just, and Good, that never denies himself.

II. First, as to Preventing Grace ; I affirm that all preventing Graces, necessary to prevent the Fall of Man or Angels, were freely given to them, as far as was consistent with God's perfections, and with the Nature of his Creatures : I know not what notion Men have of God ; but they who think otherwise, must conceive him, as a Covetous Being, that, like a Merchant or Usurer, sells his Graces by price and Measure, and parts with 'em, with regret and Envy : Or as an Envious one, who, tho' what he gives to others be no lessening to his own abundance ; nevertheless with-holds his Gifts, especially in a time of extremity and need, when the fall of Man might have been prevented by it. What absurdities and Contradictions do we, by Notions like these, impute to God, and his Conduct ; He who to raise us from the Fall was so profuse as to deliver himself to Death, tho' few, very few, were like to be the better for it ? First we suppose him Instrumental to the Fall, by with-holding his preventing Graces : And then, on second thoughts, so much displeased at that Fall, which himself had been the occasion of, as to use all possible Indea-vour, even to the Sacrificing his own dear Son, to hinder the Effects thereof ; tho' only a few of the fallen race were like to receive any benefit by his Labours : This single Consideration seems to me sufficient to convince every Man whom Prejudice has not blinded to Common Sense, of the falsity of this pretence, and that, before the Fall, God did actually dispense to Man all the preventing Graces that were treasured up in his infinite Power and Love to hinder its Event.

II. That to suppose God not to have given to Man his Preventing Graces is to make him an absurd, Covetous and Envious Being.

Chap. III.

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III. Moreover, it is most certain that, from our first Creation, God hath acted toward us as an infinite and unlimited Being, refusing no Graces to us; that he could dispense without denying his own Nature and Perfections: It is the Property of God to act, especially towards a Holy Creature, in an Infinite, Perfect and Communicative Manner; and whatever Limitation is in the ways of God comes from the Creature; This Adorable Creator and Preserver could never niggardly deny us any Graces whereby our Fall might have been prevented: Can we conceive that this God and Father, this Nourisher and Preserver of us all: He who is Love it self, and who, by enriching others, is not himself the Power; but always is the same rich, overflowing, inexhaustible fountain of Grace and Truth: Can we, I ask, conceive him to be so hard a Father, as to see his Children perish for lack of food, when his Store-house is full, and he might easily relieve their wants? What a terrible Idea do Men form of God by imputing to him this Deficiency of Grace? Even a generous Enemy would scorn to treat his Adversary thus; much more would a Friend, to treat his Friend; A Father his beloved Child; a Brother, a Brother; a Husband, his Spouse; all which are yet but faint Resemblances of that intimately close Relation between God and Man: Indeed we know God but little as we ought, and for want of knowing him, we dishonour and blaspheme him under a pretence of honouring him: We think to defend the Cause of God, when we plead the Devil's, imputing a Cruelty to him that can only be the effect of Diabolick Malice: God, say we is obliged to nothing; which, I own, is, strictly speaking, true: But then do's God expect our Obligations, to act in a manner worthy of his Perfections, *i. e.* as a Good, Gracious and Powerful Being? When the Ideas of things were formed, when the Heaven and Earth, Angels and Men were Created, what Obligation was God under? Was it not the Effect of pure Disinterested Love? And this Principle will or can it fail, when the Destruction of his Work, or rather of a beloved Friend is in danger? Men may say what they please, I for my part will never entertain

tain thoughts so absurd of God; no I would rather Chap. III.
believe he wanted Power than Love.

IV. But why, it may still be ask'd, did God not try all possible means, in a particular display of all his Graces? Why did he not Address to Man by Exterior and Interior Voices? Why was he not always present with him? Why did he not fill him with Heavenly and Powerful Delectations, ravish his Senses by Celestial Visions, and draw his Faculties by Divine Allurements? Why did he not hinder Satan's approach to Adam, annihilate the Tree of Knowledge, bruise the old Serpent, with his deluding Tongue, and hinder the Fall by infinite other ways, and preventing Operations? Soft, soft poor Creature, Contented not with God so warmly; nor imitate those foolish Men, who, to support their Capricious Fancies, say any thing that Imagination do's suggest, not knowing either what they say, or what they would be at: Ascend we to the first Spring of Truth, where a Light will flow in upon us, sufficient to dispel all these clouds of Darknes.

V. When this great and Gracious Majesty; tho' it had no need of Men, was pleased, in Infinite Love, to Communicate his Delights unto them, in a most generous manner; sporting with them as a Father with his Children, a Friend or Brother with a friend or Brother: To qualify them for so Divine Injoyments, he required a free and generous offer of their Love: To present his Divine Injoyments to a Love that is forced, constrained, and selfish, is entirely opposite to the Divine Designs, and unworthy of his Perfections; and therefore God cannot do it; and for us to desire him so to act, were the most absurd Injustice in all the World; because by condescending to it, God would deny his own Design, his real Love, his true Delights, his ways of acting, in a word, Himself: When therefore God had created Man, it was requisite to prevent him with Interior Lights, Movings, Delectations, Sentiments, and other motives to inform him of his Duty, and draw him amorously to the practice of it, by discovering to him the Beauty, Greatness, Magnificence, Delight that were

IV. A Specification of certain preventing Graces by which some Men imagine, the Fall had been prevented, if God had pleased to give them.

V. That the preserving of certain Divine preventing Graces unto Man, in the way that some propose, is impossible, absurd, vain, hurtful to Man, and unworthy of God.

Chap. III. were treasured up in himself: and when Man was sufficiently informed and attracted, his Duty was actually to correspond; tho', if he refuse, God cannot force him; because it were to contradict his own Design, and violate the Nature of his Creature, who is essentially free: All that God can do consistent with his Design, is, for a while to over-look the perverseness of his Creatures, to continue the offer of his Graces, and supply 'em with fresh motives and allurements to co-operate with him; which if Man obstinately resists, there is no remedy, no sort of Grace will hinder the Event of Sin; and for God to continue still to give them, were not only vain, but would expose 'em to be trampled on by Sinners, confirm them in Sin, and render them more Excuseless: When things go thus, and Man hath been sufficiently advertized of the Evils he is falling into, the best way will be for God to withdraw his Grace, and leave him to his Choice: The feeling the sad Effects of Sin may be a means to bring him to consider, it may give him a salutary Confusion, and dispose him to Repent; when Preventing Graces tendred unseasonably, and against the Sinner's bent, would only serve to harden him in his ways.

VI. *Proofs of these Truths.*

VI. And to enlarge a little on these useful Truths, I say, 1st. That, if Man will not co-operate with the Divine preventing Grace; there is no remedy left, or means to preserve him from a Fall. Because it is fixt by the Divine Decree that Mans Correspondence shall be Free; and God hath given him a Principle freely to act and correspond: So that, if Man refuse a voluntary Compliance with God's Grace, this Defect cannot be otherwise supply'd without destroying God's Work, Establishment and Decree.

2. I add, that if Man will not co-operate with God, Sin is unavoidable, and no Grace can hinder its Event; because the formality of Sin consists in disobeying the Will, and other Faculties from their Divine and proper Objects: So that, tho' God present never so many Graces, if Man, instead of admitting, turn himself away, Sin is actually committed in the mind: And tho' God should remove, out of the Sin-

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ner's way, the things he is going to abuse, he would still contrive, and find out others of a more Pernicious Nature: Tho' it is to be remark'd, that, since God has Created Natural things, and Subjected them to Mans Dominion, enduing him with Liberty to govern both himself and them, 'tis absurd to pretend he should retract his Act, and destroy his own Establishment: No, let Man alter his Conduct, when he conducts himself amiss.

3. I further add, that if Man will not co-operate with God, the Continuance of preventing Graces would be a vain and useless Act: For, what Advantage is it to offer an increase of Grace continually to a Creature that wilfully refuses to admit them?

4. It were I add, as a fourth remark, to expose Gods love, and inestimable Graces to defilement: To offer God, and press the Acceptance of his Graces to a Creature that finds no pleasure in them; but despises and abhors them, is to expose 'em to vileness and contempts: What is a Love infused or extorted by Machines of Force? To force one to love against his Liking, and to besiege his Affections with Objects, Motives, and Exhortations, whether he will or not, is not only Barbarous and Brutish, but produces horror and aversion in the Soul: God will not prostitute his Graces thus; He will not expose 'em to be trod under Foot, nor accept a forced Love: The Love he requires from us, is a free and Generous one: This is his Irrevocable Order and Decree; Irrevocable, I say, because establish'd by a Wisdom, Power, and Goodness which deserve to be admired and adored by us.

5. I observe, that the Continuance, or Increase of preventing Graces to a Creature that will not Co-operate with them, do's only strengthen and confirm him in iniquity and Sin: To prevent, with pleasures and Divine Delectations, a Creature that obstinately turns away from God, that do's not, has not, and will not Co-operate with his Divine Impressions, is only to enslave him to Sensuality and lust, and tempts him to believe, because God seeks him against his Will, gives him continually Divine Delights while he wilfully forsakes

Chap. III. forsakes him, that therefore he is dependent on him, and subject to his Fancy ; and so blows him up with Vanity and Pride, and makes his Soul a Nest of Voluptuousness and Pride. From these Considerations it appears, that when God hath dispers'd [as he always does] sufficient preventing Graces to a Creature, it is best, in all respects, to leave him to pursue his Will, seeing the Continuance of them is incongruous, absurd, unworthy, vain, aggravates the Creatures Guilt and Misery, prostitutes God to Dishonour and a Denial of himself, and exposes Man to Miseries more grievous in proportion to the Graces by him despised.

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VII. Preventing Graces are therefore not to be expected, or desired by us, in the forementioned Case or Sense ; nor may we, under this pretence, form absurd and impious Notions, and then complain that God hath denied us Graces necessary to preserve us from a Fall : The true Notion of preventing Grace is, All that God can do to engage us to a pure, a generous, noble and respectful Love and Correspondence with him, such as does neither fill Man with Vanity and Self-esteem ; nor pollute his Nature ; nor expose him to Misery unavoidable : And in this Sense, I dare affirm, God hath not been wanting to his Creatures, he hath done all that could be to preserve 'em from Sin and Disobedience, without denying himself, his Work, and committing all the Absurdities and Incongruities just now mentioned : And therefore this Complaint is as absurd and impious in one Sense ; as it is false in another : In that God's Grace did never fail his Creature, but prevented him, according to the boundless extent of his great Love and Mercy : This Truth I dare confidently affirm, and wish I could proclaim through Heaven and Earth, That all the Graces that are treasur'd up in the infinite Wisdom, Power, and Love of God were freely given by God unto his Creatures.

**VIII. An
Objection**

taken from the Distinguishing Grace into Sufficient, (which is allowed to have been given before the Fall) and Efficacious (which is deny'd to have been given.)

Graces ;

Graces; one Sufficient, the other Efficacious: The former, say they, God did give to Man; but not the latter. Had God been pleased to give these Graces, both Men and Angels had been preserved from falling: Here is the great Difficulty; and a fine Difficulty it is, invented by the Schoolmen, I believe, on purpose to darken and perplex our Minds: However let's see if it will admit a fair Solution.

By Sufficient Grace is understood, that Grace by which Man may Act and Persevere: By Efficacious, That, by which he doth infallibly Act, without ever falling from it: And now I ask, is this Distinction founded on the Nature of these Graces; or upon Man's Admission of them? If upon Man's Admission; the Objection then is vain; because Sufficient and Efficacious Grace will be, in respect of God, the self same Grace; sometimes Sufficient, and sometimes Efficacious, according as Man admits it: Sufficient if not admitted: Efficacious if admitted, so as to be Effectual: So that if God, to prevent the Fall, hath dispensed Sufficient Grace, he hath also dispensed Efficacious, both being in Substance and Reality the same.

IX. This Distinction therefore applied to God is absurd and null; nor can we consistently pretend that God hath given Sufficient, but not Efficacious Graces: We must affirm of both alike that they were given, or denied to us; because with respect to God they are the self-same Grace, and consequently if we cannot deny God to have given Sufficient Grace before the Fall, neither can we deny his having given Efficacious Grace, which even they who make the Objection allow to be given since the Fall.

To make God act otherwise, is to make him Act in a visibly absurd and extravagant Manner: Can we imagine that God did first abandon all Mankind unto Destruction, for want of Efficacious Grace to prevent their Fall; and then, on second Thoughts, to rescue a few from the Miseries of their Fall, by dispensing to them his Efficacious Graces, which had he pleased to give, the Fall and Misery of all might have been easily prevented? If Men, who Act in this Ca-

Chap III.
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*IX. That in respect of God it is absurd to say Sufficient Grace is not Efficacious: And consequently one cannot deny him to have dispens'd Efficacious Graces before the Fall.*



Chap. III *precious Manner, deserve a Character of Folly, how cautious should we be of representing God so niggardly of his Graces, and making him Act in such an Inconsistent Manner? Now the Arguments I have used to prove that Sufficient Grace was given, do conclude likewise for Efficacious Grace, in its true intelligible Notion, and freed from all that Obscurity with which Imagination represents it.*

X. *That the Distinction of Sufficient and Efficacious Grace, if founded upon God, is Chimerical and Absurd: That Efficacious Grace so call'd, and distinguish'd from Sufficient, is a Scholastic Chimera.* X. For, what difference would we conceive between Sufficient and Efficacious Grace? If from what we call Sufficient Grace, he who admits it, and Corresponds therewith, cannot derive sufficient Strength and Vertue from it, to oppose the Assaults of Sin, it is not sufficient: If when Temptations happen, or opportunity of Sinning presents it self, he wants that Grace, without which he can do nothing, as some speak, or that Grace with which he might succeed, if God, who with-holds it from him, would vouchsafe to give it: This, tho' call'd sufficient, is not sufficient, but absurd, and unworthy of God, and by calling it sufficient we contradict our selves: If by Efficacious Grace, we understand a Grace containing more than what is Sufficient, this is then Superfluous: For what would we have more than Sufficient? And if this Superfluous Grace was necessary to preserve us from committing Sin, the Sufficient was not Sufficient; but if it was not necessary, it was then indifferent; which is not agreeable to our Notion of Efficacious Grace.

XI. *That Sufficient and Efficacious Grace are the same thing under two different Appellations, on account of two Subjects to which they are applied.* XI. Sufficient and Efficacious Grace are in reality the same, and only differ in Expression: The first is applied to God, who gives us what is sufficient for us: The second, unto Man, who, by admitting this Sufficient Grace, makes it Effective or Efficacious: They are, I say, at bottom, the self-same thing, notwithstanding these different Appellations given on account of him who gives; and him who doth admit it.

XII. But

XII. But if we are minded to apply both these Chap. III. Appellations unto God, and also unto Man, and to distinguish Grace into Sufficient and Efficacious in respect of both; they will still appear to be the self-same Grace: For, in respect of God, we call that Sufficient Grace, which contains all Principles and Motives necessary to engage a spontaneous Agent to act in a saving manner: And that Grace is Efficacious, from which a Free-willing and Corresponding Agent derives all Effects necessary to attain Salvation. It is therefore the self-same Grace, in respect both of God and of Man, and that whether Man do Correspond or not: For, if he admit it, and Correspond thereto, the same Grace of God is Sufficient and Efficacious: If he do not admit it, nor co-operate with it, it is not Sufficient nor Efficacious; because it is not God's Will that his Grace should be sufficient to Man's Salvation without his Correspondence: This therefore is not Sufficient; in respect of God indeed it is, but not in respect of Man, except he correspond therewith: Nor is it Efficacious, because it is not the Will of God, that the Graces he gives should be Effective unless Man concur and co-operate with it.

XIII. To imagine that the Grace of God does absolutely incline the Will, and infallibly determine Man, without his free Concurrence, and call this Efficacious Grace, is a mere Chimera, and ruins the Designs of God, and the Divine Correspondence between God and Man: There is no such Grace as irresistibly determines, tho' if there were it is more reasonable to believe, God would have given it rather to all Mankind, while Innocent and Just in Adam, than, after the Fall, to only a few of his sinful Race. These are for certain mere Fictions of our depraved Fancy, injurious to God, and directly contrary to his Will, and to his Conduct. Such they will appear to every-one that seriously considers the Demonstrations given, in the foregoing Book, concerning the Nature of the Divine Decree, and the ways of its Execution.

Grace was at first denied and afterwards given to a few, is to impute to God a Partial, Envious and Capricious Conduct.

Chap. III.  The Distinction therefore of Sufficient and Efficacious Grace, understood in the sense of our Modern Predestinarians; and also the Capricious Partiality in which they imagine these Graces are dispens'd, must be rank'd among the Catalogue of School-Chimeras. The Liberty I have used in treating this Distinction, will I believe be offensive unto many; but to anticipate their Complaints and Outcries of Blasphemy, which, it is probable, they will raise against me, I add, That this Fiction of Efficacious Grace borders upon Blasphemy: For what is it else to affirm, God might, and nevertheless would not, remove all Obstacles of our Salvation; that he is partial in the distribution of his Grace, that he gives them only to a few, but requires of all Duties impossible to be performed, without such Assistance as he will not give; tho' he need only to Will, and it will be given?

Now Infallible or Efficacious Grace is big with all these Fictions, so injurious unto God, and unworthy of him: Whereas the only Consequence of denying this Chimera is, that God can't force the Will, because he hath decreed it should be free and determinable of it self: That his subsequent Decree can't contradict his Antecedent: That he does not deny himself: That his Will is not contrary to his Immutable Decree: That his Power does not extend to destroy or contradict his Will, not from a defect of Power, but from the Perfection of his Essential Power and Wisdom: For as Wisdom cannot contradict it self, so infinite Power cannot destroy by one Act what is establish'd by another.

XIV. *An Answer to another Complaint, viz. that God did not give the* XIV. But it may still be said, tho' we allow that God hath given to Man all his Preventing and Efficacious Graces to hinder the Fall; it is certain he did not give him the Grace of Persevering in the State of his Creation: This was that which Man most-ly wanted, and what God was not pleased to give.

*Grace of Perseverance, whereby the Fall had been prevented. In what sense God, who hath not refused us any Grace, did truly give us that of Perseverance.*



I am almost tired in effacing the Fantoms, by which Men obscure the infinite Love of God, and seek to procure themselves (tho' perhaps without direct Reflection on it) the secret Joy of excusing themselves, and murmuring against God. This Objection, I say, is false, and a mere Fantom of the Schools, in the true and solid sense of Persevering Grace. Every Grace is a Grace of Perseverance; because God, who is the giver of it, is constant, and never retracts the Graces which he gives; but wills that we should accept 'em, and that we should persevere for ever in our Acceptance, and Injoyment of them: And thus the Grace which God dispens'd to Man was a Grace of Perseverance; it was so in God's Design; and had been so in Event, had it been admitted and co-operated with, as perseveringly as it was given. Chap. III.

XV. It was not, indeed, an Absolute, Irresistible Grace, that engages Man to Nothing: It was not an Establishing or Confirming Grace, like that I spoke of in the foregoing Chapter. God could not make any thing persevere in Man without his own free Concurrence; and what is it we would have him make to persevere? Is it his Grace? This can only be by Man's Admission and free Consent. Is it Man's Consent? This can only be by an absolute Resignation of himself to God; which if he refuse; would we have God make him to persevere in his refusal? or rather make him not persevere a free self-determining Agent? If these be our Notions of Persevering Grace let us place it among the rest of the School Fictions, without deducing particularly the train of Absurdities which it is pregnant with. XV. That the vulgar Notices of the Grace of Perseverance is an Absurd, Inconsistent Fiction.

## C H A P. IV.

*That Sin was not from the Divine Decree.  
That before its Commission God had not the  
Idea of it. How God hath the Idea of Sin.*

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Others pretend, he not only permitted, but decreed it; and that, antecedent to this Decree, he was indifferent to Will, or not will the Commission of it. A very imperfect Knowledge of God, and of the Nature of his Decree, his Will and Act, will convince us fully, that God cannot decree Sin, nor consent to its Commission, \* *He hath commanded no Man to do Wickedly, nor given any Man licence to Sin.* † *He hath no pleasure in Wickedness.* If Sin was an effect of the Divine Decree, it would then be agreeable and conform thereto; and consequently a Real, Good, Powerful, Happy and Beauteous Being, as partaking of the Properties of the Divine Decrees, the Idea of which contains nothing but what is conform unto, and representative of God: It is all Glorious and shining with Light, Reality, Beauty, Goodness, Blessedness, and therefore were Sin to be found among the Divine Decrees, it would be of a Nature, Real, Good and Beauteous, *i. e.* not be Sin.

But the absurdity of this Notion will be more apparent; if we consider that the very supposing Sin to be decreed by God, supposes that he actually Sins: Because the formality of Sin consists in willing the Commission of it: Nor will it be any *Salvo* to distinguish between willing a Thing by Approbation and good liking, and willing its Event; for this

Distinction

\* Ecclus.  
15. 20.

† Pl. 5. 5.

Distinction is absurd : He who abhors a Thing can never will the Event thereof. To will or consent to the Event of any Thing, and to approve or be pleased with that Thing, are different Expressions of the self same thing. But I add, that to will that Sin from Non-existent should become Existent ; or to will its Inlargement and Increase, is, to Sin : The most precise Idea that one can form of an interior Sin actually committed, is the actual willing its Existence or Increase in our Selves or Others : To will Sin in another is a sign of Envy, and if among Men it be a certain note of a depraved, envious Heart, to will it in another, How much more abominable is it to suppose it of God, all whose Ways and Works do bear the Character of his Essential Purity and Perfection ?

But it may here be said : God is not obliged to the same Rules as Man : Those Things and Actions which are Sins to Men, do not impeach the Holiness of God. I answer, Let us keep close to the Hypothesis before us, of willing that Sin should, from Non-existent, become Existent ; or of willing its Increase : And I affirm, that this, and all Acts whatever tending to it, are indubitably Sins ; and if they who urge this do mean that God may do these things without any Impeachment of his Holiness, which Man by doing contracts Sin and Guilt, they do by this Pretence justify the imputing to God all the Abominations, Darknes, Disorder, Impiety and Diabolick Wickedness in the World, provided we call all these Abominations, Holiness in God : Whereas poor Man, if he dare to do, or imitate God in any of these things, falls into Sin and Guilt : All which is indeed a Doctrine terribly Mysterious, and imputes to God all that dark Mystery of Iniquity which is contained in the Idea of the Devil, with this difference only, that all those Things and Actions, which imputed to Men or Devils, are Darknes and Abomination, do change their Nature and become Light, Holiness and Truth when imputed to God.

But here it may be objected, that I did just now affirm, that if God had decreed Sin, it would not



Chap. IV. he Sin, and consequently not Sin in respect of God :  
 No, I answer, nor yet in respect of Men ; tho' by inferring a Consequence, as I did, from an impossible Supposition, I ought not to be charged with maintaining either the Supposition or the Consequence ; nor do I tie my self up hereby from deriving opposite Consequences from the same Supposition, to expose its Absurdity more clearly.

It is said, I know, that the willing Sin is not Sin to God, because it is Instrumental to his Glory : But this is all over Darkness and Falshood : The willing Sin directly dishonours God ; but Sin, when committed without, and against his Will, may, with a great deal of Pains and Labour on the Parts of God and Man, contribute indirectly to his Glory : Therefore to pretend that Sin, from Non-existent can be will'd or decreed to be Existent, for God's Glory, is notoriously false. We ought to say, that the willing Sin directly dishonours God ; tho', afterwards, God may, with a great deal of Pains and Labour, derive indirectly his Glory from it ; but this in respect only of a few : And that to will for this End a thing which directly stains his Purity and Honour, would be an eternal Reproach unto him, and is therefore Impious to conceive : It is not therefore true, nor even possible, for Sin to owe its Event to the Divine Decree : On the contrary, if it happen without, and against this Decree ; the whole Oeconomy of God relating to it, will tend to extinguish, restrain, leave it to it self, or to regulate, by his Providence, the Course and Effects thereof, as will appear hereafter ; but never to will its Existence or Increase.

II. *The Idea of Sin is not from God ; nor*

II. Even the Idea of Sin is not from God ; nor conceivable before the actual Commission of it : Because that which is not in Idea cannot be conceived ; but Sin is not in Idea till the Sinner doth conceive it.

*is it n the Arbitrary Divine Conception, before a Creature actually Sins.*

The Idea of Sin is not eternal, nor independent ; it would be indeed a noble Privilege to allow this  
 Monstrous

Monstrous Idea above all others, which, in presence Chap. IV. of the Independent and Self-sufficing Divine Idea, are as Nothing, as also is the Idea of Sin for much stronger Reasons: Now Nothing, or the Idea of Nothing, if I may so speak, is not the formal Idea of Sin: Nor is it establish'd by the Arbitrary Divine Conception; nor is it like others, an effect of its Decree; because whatever Exists by vertue of this Decree is of a Nature most real, good, worthy of God, and representative of him: Whereas the Idea of Sin is an Idea of Repugnance or Contradiction to the Divine Conception, Decree and Will, and therefore could not be till some Creature did actually oppose it: For simple Nothing bears no Repugnance or Opposition to the Divine Decree; nor does a Creature considered as from God; nor does the Design or Decree of God concerning the Existence of a Free, Self-determining Creature to represent his Perfections more Nobly and Divinely; nor, last of all, the Conduct of such a Creature, so long as it is regulated by the Divine Decree: Hitherto then the Idea of Sin is not to be found.

III. And tho' God, the alone independent self-sufficing Being, sees that Man, in and of himself, is Nothing: Tho' he sees him as a Free, Self-determining Agent, because Himself, the Fountain of all Being and Perfection, hath given him this Principle of Freedom, and consented he should act in an infinite Sphere of Liberty as God and the Blessed do; yet this does not furnish us with an Idea of Sin. For tho' Man who in himself is Nothing may decline from his Point, it is not the Capacity, but the actual declining from it that makes the Idea of Sin: And as to Liberty, in it self considered, it is the greatest Reality and Perfection belonging to us; it is Man's peculiar Privilege, besides whom there is, in this lower World, no Creature that can govern his Actions, vary and direct his Conduct, and is thereby capable of sinning: There is besides Man a World of Creatures, but these being not appointed by God to be his End, God not seeing him declining to them before he actually does decline.

God

Chap. IV. God is the End of Man, and Liberty was given him to enable him to tend towards, and enjoy him in a more Divine and Noble Manner : We see then that in God, in his Conception, in his Will, his End, his Work, in Liberty, in its Conduct conform to the Conception and Design of God, the Idea of Sin is not to be found in God or Man ; therefore I conclude that God did not Conceive, Decree nor Will even the Idea of it.

*IV. The Idea of Sin was framed by the Creature who sinned: The sinful Creature is the Occasional Cause of this Idea in the Divine Conception.*

IV. Nor was it possible for him so to do : Because God being the most pure Source of Reality and Good, the Effects of his Conception and Decree must necessarily partake of these Qualities, and be Good and Real : And therefore in Man, and his Liberty, considered as coming forth of the Hands of God we see a Subject, Motives, End, and every thing throughout Good and Real : But tho' he be not the Source of his own Reality and Perfection ; he was endued with a Power of Liberty, and thought fit to use, or rather to abuse it, proposing to himself an imaginary End ; tho' incapable to give it the least degree of Reality and Perfection, as not being the Source thereof ; and hence the Idea of Sin, or Disapplication from God, arose in the Creatures Mind, by opposing his own Arbitrary Conception, Decree and Will to the Divine : And because God still continued to Act upon him, by Emanations of his Light, pursuant to the Decree of his Creation ; which Light and gracious Operations being not admitted, but opposed and sent back, the Idea of Sin is (as I may say) hereby imprinted in the Divine Conception : Not that it is in the Power of Man to make any Impression on it ; no, but his opposing the Divine Emanations, and causing them to return to God fruitless and barren, without the Consent of Man, discovers to God that his Divine Ideas or Realities are rejected and opposed ; so that the Idea of resisting God and his Conception, the barrenness of the Principle he gives to Man cannot come from God nor from his Conception, but the Creature that Sins is the first Cause of the Idea, which God hath of it by resisting his Luminous Operations on it.

V. But



V. But this is to be applied to the first Sin, before which, it was not in Idea; but when once committed by Angels or by Men, it was easie for God to conceive it as possible to be repeated, tho' the Creature was not necessitated to repeat it; but might by contrary Acts oppose and extinguish it, accordingly God hath exhorted him, and used all possible Means to engage him in the Combat: So far he was from consenting to the repeating of it, or from decreeing its increase in all the infinite variety of Circumstances in which it is committed. Opinions of this Nature, sound so horribly that had not a wrong Application of their Studies enchanted the Minds of Men, it were impossible to admit 'em: For Sin, and its Idea, what is it? A repugnance to all the Ideas of the Divine Conception, to all its Decrees, Wills, Acts and Operations, and to every thing representative of God; and this Monster, could it be the Product, Conception, Establishment, or Decree of God? Dreadful thought! dreadful to be considered, but more to be approved! From the most Holy Divine Conception, what else can issue or proceed besides Light, Reality, Objects and Decrees, representative of and conformable unto God? Where then can this Monster, Sin, be found in it?

VI. So Holy is the Divine Conception, that even Sin is perceived by it under the Idea of Light and Goodness: It is in God a Perception of his Light and gracious Efflux returning from, or repelled by the Creature, who will not admit it, towards its blessed Fountain: Or, it is a Sentiment or Perception that the Arbitrary Communication of his Light and Graces are stopt (as it were) or hindered from overflowing upon the Creatures according to his original Design and Will. When the Creature rejects God's Light and Grace, they are reflected towards their Source, and re-ascend without any Fruits, or as not admitted: They return, I say, by a kind of Reflux or Reflection empty without Improvement: For Light and Grace that are shed abroad upon the good, return with Fruit towards their Source, and bring tydings of the Consent of Man, or of a Welcome

Chap. IV.

*V. When Sin was committed, and God had consequently an Idea of it, he foresaw its Duration, but not as necessary: So far he was from having decreed it, which is a horrible Opinion.*

*VI. The pure and admirable Way in which Sin is perceived by God, (viz.) under the Idea of Light and Goodness.*

*Chap. IV.* come from him ; whereas from the Wicked, they return void and barren, without the Fruit of Man's consent, tho' God had sown the Principle of it : Whereupon God withdraws his Talent, and gives it to another. Such is the way in which Sin is perceived by God, and a most Pure and Divine way it is ; in which, tho' this be only an imperfect Description of it ; we see no room, no Source of the Idea and Decree of Sin. Can God approve, can he order and direct that the gracious Effusions of his Light and Grace should be rejected, and sent back void and fruitless ? The Idea of this Barrenness, and Remission of his Graces ; this denying God, his Light, and gracious Operation can it be from him ? Let's abominate this Thought, as a mere Invention of the Father of Lyes, who alone contrived, established and decreed these things.

*VII. That the Distinction of the Divine Will, in respect of Sin, and its Event into Will of good Pleasure, and Will of Sign is Absurd and Wicked.*

VII. The distinction of God's Will, into Will of good Pleasure and Will of Sign, which some have invented to save these Matters, is impious and absurd, in that it supposes God to Will, Decree and Establish Sin, while he signifies to Men his Dislike and Disapprobation of it ; to disapprove it by his signified or reveal'd Will, and to approve it by his Will of good Pleasure. To serve their Hypothesis they invent a Will of Sign that is False, Hypocritical and Lying, that bears false Witness of what is in God, and a Will of good Pleasure, which is Wicked and Malicious, that pleases it self in effacing the Image of Purity and Holiness essential unto God ; and dare Men impute such horrible Fictions unto God, for fear of rejecting their pre-conceived Notions of these Matters as Lyes and Falshood ?

## C H A P. V.

*That the Idea of the Event of Sin is not from  
God: Of the Prevision of Sin.*



**B**UT is it possible, some may ask, for I *That*  
Sin to be committed, and not fore-*the Idea of*  
seen by God. This Difficulty hath *Sin and*  
been so oft already answered, that *its Event*  
'tis tiresome to take any further no-*are not in*  
tice of it. However, I say that if *God.*  
our Notions concerning the Divine

Conception, Prevision, Will, be sound, God could not then foresee or will it; because he can foresee only what is of his own Order and Establishment, or is a necessary effect thereof: He doth not foresee in a determin'd Manner that which is establish'd to be free and undetermined: The Divine Conception is indifferent in conceiving what Things, and in what Manner it pleases, and as to the Idea of Sin it is not necessary or essential to it. It is a piece of Folly, like that of Sinners, to imagine, that the All-perfect Mind necessarily conceives the foul Pollutions of us wretched Sinners; whereas certain it is God would not see nor think upon 'em, did he not desire to see his Luminous Graces in us; but because he sheds abroad continually his Graces on us, and we resist, either refusing absolutely to admit them, or admitting them in an imperfect Manner, and reflect them back on God in a form of Barrenness or Imperfection; he therefore sees the Abominations of his Creatures; he sees 'em, I say, by an Idea of Light and Grace returning to, or reflected back upon him; he sees 'em not as established, conceived, or foreseen by him: Were Sin of a Divine Establishment and Decree, God would not then perceive it as repugnant to what he expects from his Creatures: To perceive Sin, is to perceive the Rejection or Denial of the Divine Decree, and of that Light and Truth which God desires to see in us, it is to see his Creatures reflect or turn their  
Backs



Chap. V. *Backs upon all the Graces and good Things with which he desires to see them fill'd.*

*II. That God knows Sin, because he hath not foreseen it; or because he has the Idea of that eternal Happiness which he was pleas'd to bestow upon, and to foresee in his Creature. The Idea of Sin is not included in that of Liberty.*

*III. An Objection concerning the Creature's Lability which some pretend must be necessarily known by God before its actual Event.*

II. So far is God from having foreseen the Sin, before the Eternal Happiness of Man, that on the contrary he would not actually see Sin at all, did he not first foresee the free and eternal Blessedness of his Creature: For the Idea which God hath of Sin, is the opposing or resisting the eternal happy State, on the Creatures part; and therefore did not God foresee his Light and Grace in Man, he could not see Man's Opposition or Resistance. This Divine Light and Happiness in Man, is God's original Decree, and that which he foresees, the Man hath defeated the effect thereof. He also did foresee Man's free Conduct, because it is his own Decree, but then he saw this Liberty of Conduct under a form of free admission which Man would give to the Divine Impressions, and not as opposing or rejecting them: No, this was not in the Idea, or Divine Conception, of that Liberty of Conduct which God was pleas'd to give to Man; nor was it known or fore-known by God; because it did not as yet exist even in Idea; nor was it producible by the Power of God; nor was Liberty given by him to produce it; but freely and nobly to admit the Infinite All-perfect Being.

III. It will be perhaps objected, that from hence it follows, that the Creature's Lability was not known by God, before its actual Fall: For if God did know that Man was naturally Labile before he sinned, he had the Idea of Sin, before its actual Commission: But there is no reason to deny God's having an Idea of Man's Lability, because he is naturally Labile, and God who made him knew to be sure his Nature.

This Objection, and almost all the rest, comes from confounding Negative with Positive Things, and not well considering what is meant by Nothing, and by the DIVINE SUFFICIENCY; absurdly imagining that God must not only know nothing, but know it in a positive manner.

IV. If we consider God in his eternal, necessary, self-sufficient Nature, he thinks positively only on himself, and all Ideas are necessarily, and in themselves mere Nothings, before his eternal self-sufficing Essence. But tho' the Ideas of Things are Nothing, God has not therefore, strictly speaking, an Idea of Nothing, nor did he positively think that all Ideas were Nothing, tho' in reality they were; it was contradictory and impossible for God in his pure self-sufficing State to think thus, because this Thought of God would have given them a real Being: God was his own sole positive Object, in which he fully acquiesced; all Ideas remaining in their State of Nothing without being positively or actually thought on as such: So in like manner, God knows his intelligent Creatures, by perceiving or thinking on their Reality and Perfection, and not the Lability of their Natures: Lability, 'tis true, is essential to them, but is not perceived or thought on by God in a positive manner; because Lability is a Non-Being, and adds no Perfection to the Divine Conception; nor yet to the Creature's positive real Being; nor to the real Idea of that Being, and therefore needs not to be conceived or thought on to be a Nothing, and even such a Nothing as is not to be found in bare Not-Being, but is something below, and more a Nothing than mere Nothing.

V. It is therefore an Error to imagine, that the complete Idea of the Creature includes a perception of Lability before his actual Fall; it only includes a complete perception of all the Realities and Perfections Essential to it, of all those Lights and Graces which God continually offers to it, and in the admittance of which its Beatitude consists; and also of that Liberty with which it is endued to admit 'em freely in a Noble, Divine, and Excellent Manner; in which, tho' the Creature be of a Labile Nature, Lability is not included, because properly it is a Not-Being, or an Idea below Not-being, and needed not to be directly thought on, or perceived to be what it is: Lability would be after its way of being, *i. e.* a Not-Being founded on what is less than Nothing,

Chap. V.

IV. No-  
thing, and  
that  
which is  
less than  
Nothing  
needs not  
to be per-  
ceived by  
God to be  
what it  
is, or to  
be a Not-  
Being, or  
less than a  
Not-  
Being.

V. That  
the com-  
plete Idea  
of a Crea-  
ture be-  
fore Sin  
does not  
include  
the Idea  
of Privation, or  
of Sin,  
nor conse-  
quently of  
Lability.

Chap. V. Nothing, tho' it were not perceived or thought on by the Omni-perfect Mind, whose true and proper Object is Reality, and not Nothing ; much less Sin, which is a State below that of Nothing, with all the possible ways of sinning, as the Objection does suppose: What a worthy Notion have they of God, who think the Idea of a holy Creature, in the Divine Conception, to be incomplete, without the opposite Idea of whatever Impurities, Blasphemies, Impieties, Evils and Miseries it might possibly fall into? Conclude we then, that whatever does suppose or include the Idea of Sin, was not establish'd, thought, or known before the Creature fell from the Perfection of its Being ; and that till then the real, positive and complete Idea of the Creature included pure Reality and Perfection, without any Privation, and that consequently God foresaw the Infinite Good which was the free Creatures true and proper End, but had no Idea of Sin, 'till the Creature, by opposing the Divine Order and Decree, produced this monstrous thing, giving it an ideal and actual Existence.

VI. That VI. What then, it will be said, Did the Divine *it does not* Prevision err? Were its Designs vain and ineffectual? *therefore* I answer, No ; and in order to conceive it, let it be *follow,* observed, 1st. That God is not partial in his Designs ; nor is he limited by private Reasons to this or that particular Object. God's antecedent Will is not that such particular Persons should partake of his eternal Happiness, on account of their personal Distinctions ; but on account of the Intelligent Nature with which they are endued. He foresees in them eternal Happiness, as they are Human Creatures, nor does their Disobedience make his Designs abortive. But, which I would have, 2dly, observed, his Will and Design stand fix'd, and remain of the same Reality and Power : It is still God's great, unchangeable, universal Will that Intelligent Creatures should partake of his Infinite Bliss ; which Will is unalterably founded on their being Intelligent Creatures capable to admit and enjoy the eternal Blessedness in a free and infinite Manner ; which *an Immu-* if  
*rable, In-*  
*fallible*  
*Event.*



if fome particular Perfons refuse to do, he leaves 'em to themselves; nor does it alter his great Design, nor the reasons of it which still remain of General and Universal Nature. God raises other Intelligent Creatures; whom, if they oppose his gracious Designs, he leaves to pursue their Ways, and prosecuting his first Designs, still raises more, till at last a Number correspond, sufficient to fill up the Designs of God; which, when accomplish'd, God will efface such as have oppos'd his Design out of his Thought and Remembrance, no more to think upon 'em, as being by their own default excluded from his Design, which will be then accomplish'd. God will no more foresee or think on Sin, but be eternally imploy'd in foreseeing Beatitude and Glory in his Creatures, while Sinners and their Sins shall be everlastingly forgotten by him, then will the Scriptures be accomplish'd.

*\* My Counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure. He who blesseth himself in the Earth, shall bless himself in the God of Truth, and he that sweareth in the Earth, shall swear by the God of Truth; because the former troubles are forgotten, and are hid from my Eyes; and the former shall not be remembred, nor come into Mind. As the Rain cometh down, and the Snow from Heaven, and returneth not thicker, but waters the Earth, making it bring forth and bud, that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater: So shall my Word be that goeth forth out of my Mouth (the Truth and Goodness which God, by his Word, sheds abroad on the Creatures) it shall not return unto me void; (as Sin would send it back) but it shall accomplish that which I please, and shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it; which shall be very exactly accomplish'd.*

VII. The reason why after the Day of Judgment Sinners with their Sins will be everlastingly forgotten of God, no more to come into his remembrance is, because the Effusion of his Lights and Graces, which is now continually made upon 'em, will then be at an end, no more to be reflected toward God, to give him a Perception of its Rejection, who will therefore have no Idea of the Sinner and his Sins.

Chap. V. at least it may be, and probably will be thus ; if we consider, that at the general Judgment, an entire Separation will be made of Good from Evil, of Light from Darkness, which shall be confined to their proper Centers no more to mingle and oppose each other ; and then if God and the Blessed would know the Estate of the Wicked, it will be by darting on them some sudden Rays of Light, as will be done at the final Judgment, and ought to be to the Wicked, a subject of Terror and Ignominy : But we need not suppose that after that Day they will do this. For Evil is naturally not perceivable by God, and the Blessed ones, otherwise than by opposing the Impressions of Light and Grace, the offer of which will after that Day be at an end : Whence it is reasonable to conclude, that as God did not fore-know, so neither will he know their State after that Day, the State and Felicity of the Good being the only direct and proper Objects of the Divine Knowledge and Prevision, as the \* Scripture expressly speaks ; tho' we are apt to fantasie its Language to be improper when it is most proper and exact, & *vice versa*.

VIII ARE-  
capitula-  
tion of  
the Foun-  
dations,  
the Design  
and Scope  
of this  
Doctrine.

VIII. I have enlarg'd the more upon these things, to represent these fine and useful Truths in as good a Light as possibly I can ; tho' after all, they who read, may not understand, much less be convinc'd by them. However, I hope my Labour will not be lost in respect of all, and could Men be attentive, and disengage from material Objects, and from vulgar Prejudices, I should hope, not in respect of any. For such who desire to comprehend 'em 'tis necessary to be frequent in considering God's independent Sovereignty ; that he is Self-sufficient, and that all Things before him are as Nothing ; that they are not necessary, but indifferent effects of his Arbitrary Will. For my Design is every where to inculcate, that God is all Things to himself, that he is Self-sufficient ; that all other things are naturally Nothing ; that God, by his Arbitrary Will, hath made what Representations of himself he pleased ; that whatever is real depends intirely on him ; and that

that whatever is not real, is not from him, but from another Cause. Chap. VI

God is, and is Independent : Creatures and all Reality are, and subsist by vertue of his Arbitrary Divine Conception : Nothing neither is, nor does subsist : Sin is a Monster subsisting without God, or his Conception, and Free-will, and against the Communication of his Lights and Graces : They who have Inclination and Capacity will easily understand. It is Superfluous to enlarge after the Principles explained, *Ch. 13.* of the First Book, whither I refer my Reader if he desire to be more fully Satisfy'd.

## CH A P. VI.

*That God hath not permitted Sin: In what Sense He could not hinder its Commission.*

I.



E T us now proceed to other Difficulties that are usually made about these matters. It is said, tho' it were true, that Sin was not decreed, or foreseen by God ; it was how-  
 I. *That the Event of Sin is not by the Divine Permission.*  
 ever committed by his Permission : For seeing he permitted Man to Sin,

it is plain he consented to its Commission : I answer, no, it is not plain nor certain ; but ought to be rejected as a notorious falshood ; for that, as hath been already shown, the Idea of Sin is an Idea of Repugnance to the Divine Consent. The affirming any thing to be done without the Divine Consent may perhaps sound harsh to some : But this is not what I do Affirm : Sin is not a Reality, or Thing ; but a Nothing, and worse than Nothing, and had no need to be establish'd or Will'd by God : If a Creature, that naturally and essentially is Nothing resolve to Sin, proposing itself as Principle and End of all its Conduct, as, in virtue of Liberty, it may ; it acts hereina not by or according to, but against the Will of God, which is the root and principle only of reality and perfection : In a word,



Chap. VI. whatever is good and real, is by the Will of God ;  
 W but whatever is Evil is without it ; in which Sense  
 some have explained St. John Ch. 1. v. 3. *Χωρὶς  
 οὐτὸς ἐγένετο ἑστὲ ἐν ᾧ γέγονεν.*

II. God  
 wills and  
 permits  
 the Crea-  
 ture to act  
 freely, but  
 do's not  
 consent  
 that it  
 should  
 tend to  
 nothing,  
 and to E-  
 vil. On  
 the Con-  
 trary God  
 disowns,  
 and with-  
 draws  
 from it.

II. That Man should Act, and conduct himself by  
 a Principle of Liberty is God's Establishment and  
 Decree. But this is to be understood with a limita-  
 tion only to such certain kinds of Beings and of Ob-  
 jects, from which, when [because left free and un-  
 limited by God to qualifie him to injoy in the no-  
 blest manner, the most perfective Objects] he vo-  
 luntarily disapply'd his Faculties : God, who decreed  
 him to be free, left him to act according to his Na-  
 ture, *i. e.* freely : The Creature is free by the Divine  
 Decree and Will, but misconducts itself contrary  
 thereto by virtue of its Liberty ; which is left indeed  
 to move in an Infinite unbounded Sphere ; but if  
 neglecting its perfective Objects, it chooses things  
 and Objects defective in reality and Perfection, it's  
 conducted, is not will'd, approved, permitted, nor  
 confirmed, by God ; but contrarily he leaves it to  
 itself, withdrawing as he did from Adam, with hor-  
 ror and detestation of its preferring mean unworthy  
 Objects, before the Infinite Source of Reality and  
 Perfection.

III. Thus  
 God's ha-  
 tred and  
 Detestati-  
 on of Sin,  
 and its E-  
 vent, is  
 infinite,  
 and in-  
 conserva-  
 ble : That  
 if it were  
 possible to  
 be bind'd  
 without  
 violating  
 the Crea-  
 ture's Liberty

III. Could we but feel what passes in God, when  
 Sin is committed in his Sight, *i. e.* when his Light  
 and Grace are rejected by us, we should see every  
 thing in him, in his Conception, Ideas, Will, Af-  
 fections rise up against it as a Monster. The Devil  
 and the Sinner, they are indeed consenting to it ;  
 but God has a horror of it : His Will, Consent,  
 good Pleasure, Power, do all rise up in Arms to  
 hinder if possible its Commission, and could it be  
 hindered or extinguish'd, by overturning Heaven and  
 Earth, by dying for every particular Sinner ; nay  
 Sin Committed, it is certain it had never been, be-  
 cause his hatred of it infinitely exceeded the love of  
 his Corporal life, when he was Incarnate ; but such  
 efforts God forbears for Reasons to be seen in the  
 \* place referred to. When God hath imploy'd (as  
 Chap. III 5, 6, 7

he did) his utmost Graces to prevent it, to repeat 'em, were to expose 'em to our Contempt; it were to harden us in Sin, and in presumption, which God cannot do, because he cannot give his Grace in Vain, or, which is worse, to cherish Sin. Otherwise he would spare no pains, be content to die Ten thousand thousand times, do all that Infinite Power can do to hinder its Commission, or destroy it when Committed; but this Power cannot destroy the Liberty of Man, that Work, Chief-work of Divine Wisdom; tho' the abuse of it be inconceivably and infinitely hateful to him.

IV. Such are, in truth, God's thoughts of Sin. IV. *This He hates it from the very bottom of his Soul, and proved by above all things; he infinitely indeavours to hinder God's own its Commission, and to destroy it when Committed. Oath, his His Consent is at the greatest Distance from it; his Consent doth not hatred and Aversion to it are extreme, \* The Lord regard the God hath sworn by himself, saith the Lord of hosts, I Event of abhor the Pride of Jacob. And else where he Swears, Sin. † As I live, I will not the Death of a Sinner, and \* Amos 6. much more he do's not will Sin itself, nor consent to 8. its Commission. If therefore there be Devils, and † Ezek. damn'd Spirits, Evil Men, and Evil Actions, it is not 33. 11. from the Divine Permission, Concomitant Decree, Establishment or Consent: God do's not say Yea, Amen to any of these things.*

V. There is indeed a Yea and Amen in God, that V. *There Man should Act in a Sphere of Liberty, and that he is not in should be according as he Acts: And this is the Or-God any der and Law of Justice. But it respects directly shadow of only Liberty and Reality; and if the Consequences direct thereof be Evil, it is from the abuse of Man; nor can Consent to the Will or consent of God be said, with any propriety, to respect it. When e. g. a Cutler makes or the least Sin; but sells a Knife, he consents that the buyer may use it as only to Li- he pleases; but if he Murder his Neighbour with it, berty; this and procure to himself infamy and punishment, it illustrated by a Si- cannot be said with Truth or Justice that the Cut- mulitude? ler will'd or consented to these Misfortunes. In like manner, the consent of God do's only respect the Liberty of Man, which is a reality and perfection,*

Chap. VI.

\* Lam. 3.

33.

and if Man abuse and procure his Misery by it, he may; but the Innocence of God will stand untainted, \* *He doth not willingly grieve the Children of Men.* It is not from the Consent or Will of God, that the Powers and Properties he hath indued his Creatures with, and which become their Torment when they forsake him, falls into Misery and Disorder. He only consents that they should Act, and be in such a State as they freely chuse, and therefore their Misery is from themselves. So far is God from inflicting, or consenting to their Miseries, that he is not in the least concern'd in them.

VI That  
God could  
not have  
binder'd  
Sin in the  
way that  
some ima-  
gine.

VI. They that pretend that God, if he had pleased, might absolutely have prevented Sin, do hardly know what they say themselves, but ignorantly fantasie they plead for the Power of God, while they ruin and blaspheme it. What a Comical part is God supposed to act, who while he forbids Sin, which he infinitely hates; while he threatens eternal Punishments to it, moves Heaven and Earth, becomes Incarnate, and suffers Death to remedy and hinder its increase; nay, while he protests, swears, laments and all to extinguish and to testifie his hatred of this cursed thing, might have hinder'd its Event only by his Will? By such Imaginations Men form of God a Notion more Extravagant; False, Deceitful, than they are themselves. But the absurdity of these Conceptions hath been already demonstrated in the Reflections made on \* the Preventing Graces; tho' to expose it more fully, I proceed to add a necessary Remark or two upon the Power and Will of God.

\* Ch. 3.

1, 2, 3.

VII. There

are two  
sorts of  
Powers, or  
rather  
two Senses  
of this  
Word, one  
to be at-  
tributed,  
the other  
denied of  
God.

VII. God, and the Creature's Power, (especially the sinful Creatures,) ought carefully to be distinguish'd; tho' it is very usual to confound them. Nothing is more common than to say, God can, or cannot do this or that without considering if the Power which is attributed to, or denied of him be worthy or unworthy of him; there is a Power that is worthy, and a Power that is unworthy of him, and while we attribute the first of these to God, we ought to deny the second.

VIII.



VIII. To illustrate this, I understand by Power, *Chap. VI.*  
 as applied to Intelligent Beings, that Principle in *VIII. Of*  
 them, by vertue whereof any thing to which Liberty *the Pow.r*  
 determines, becomes such as it wills it should be. *of God,*  
 And because there is a created and uncreated Li- *with re-*  
 berty, hence we conceive a Power, uncreated and *ference to*  
 created. *himself,*

The Power of Liberty uncreated is necessarily *and also to*  
 determined to God, and the Divine Essence; I mean, *things;*  
 that as God is necessarily determin'd to know and to *different*  
 acquiesce in himself, so likewise his Power is necessarily *from him.*  
 determin'd to himself, naturally producing in him the  
 Image and Love of his Essential Excellence and Per-  
 fections: But in respect of that which is not God, nor  
 essential to him, his Power and Liberty are indifferent.

Now tho' the Liberty of God be indifferent to  
 conceive or will any thing but God; and tho' if  
 it arbitrarily please to conceive or will things dif-  
 ferent from him, it be also indifferent to conceive  
 what Objects, and in what manner it please; yet  
 whatever it conceives or wills, will be only a Re-  
 presentation of the Divine Perfections: So likewise  
 the Power of God, tho' antecedently indifferent to  
 any thing but God, can do nothing but what is *IX. When*  
 Representative of him. *the Liberty*  
*of God*

IX. But as when the Liberty or Divine Free Will  
 hath determin'd to Will, conceive or establish Ob- *is deter-*  
 jects, it is no longer indifferent or indetermin'd to *min'd to*  
 them, but (tho' indetermin'd in it self) is limited and *certain*  
 determin'd by it self, to certain Acts and Ways; *things, his*  
 (which Limitation must be understood without any *Power is*  
 Imperfection, as not only proceeding from a Power *deter-*  
 essentially and infinitely Perfect; but also capable *min'd also,*  
 to have fix'd on infinite other Objects, Forms and *and no*  
 Modes:;) So, when it is determin'd, the Power Di- *longer is*  
 vine, in vertue whereof things are as pleases God, *indiffe-*  
 becomes limited and determin'd, in such Manner as *rent to*  
 Liberty hath determin'd. Not that God's Power is *them: The*  
 to be conceived as limited, in respect of Ways or *contrary*  
 Objects; for even this Self-determining Power acts *Suppositi-*  
 in an infinite and boundless Sphere; nor yet that *on is ab-*  
 this particular Limitation renders it Important, see- *surd, and*  
 ing Power. *defect of*

Chap VI. ing it was not necessary, but from pure good Pleasure, and in Love to others ; but his Power is limited to produce such Representations of the Divine Perfections, as Liberty hath determin'd ; from whence it follows, that things must necessarily be such as God freely wills they should be, and that his Power is to be considered, not as indifferent to execute the Divine Decrees. For when God is pleased freely to will the Existence of such things ; if his Power was wanting to execute the Orders of his Will ; or if it executed them in a way different from that which God does Will ; his Will would be vain and impotent ; and therefore the Effects and Operations of the Power of God, are necessarily according to the Direction of his Will.

X. In

*in the Sense  
the Power  
of God  
cannot do  
certain  
things,  
and so  
cannot  
hinder  
Sss.*

X. And therefore however absurdly we conceive of the Power of God, it cannot effect such things as are contrary to his free Establishment and Decree. If, e. g. God freely resolve that free Creatures shall Exist, they will immediately Exist ; because if his Power either would or could not execute the Orders of his Will, his Will would be Impotent and Ineffectual : And if this Power should afterwards divest them of the Liberty with which he hath endued them, the force and efficacy of this Will would be not durable, nor solid, but tend to nothing, i. e. an Act of the Divine Power and Will would be Impotent : If therefore God wills the Existence of Creatures Free and Self-determining, his Power must execute that Will ; and what God hath will'd should be Free and Self-determining, cannot be restrain'd or hinder'd from determining its Actions freely : If the Power of God interpose to over-rule such a Creature's Will, God's antecedent Will would be Ineffectual ; and he would in vain have will'd the Existence of a Creature Free and Self-determining : The Power of God would evacuate his Decree, by substituting a limited determined Agent in the room of a Free and Indetermin'd one : But the Power of God cannot contradict his Will, and consequently, when that Power hath produc'd a Being that is naturally Free and Self-determining, if that Being re-

olve

olve to Sin, the Power of God cannot hinder the Commission of it. Chap. VI.

XI. The whole Difficulty lies in the Words, Can, not, and attributing them to God ; but we ought to observe that Can, or Power, signifies in this Place, a Retraction or Annihilation of that which God hath will'd, which is a real defect of Power, and ought to be deny'd of God ; and we ought to say, that God cannot do this, that he cannot deny himself, retract or annihilate his own Decree, which Schemes of Speech the Scripture uses when it tells us, \* *God cannot lye*, † and that *he cannot deny himself*. *XI. That the Power which is here denied of God, is a real Impotence. \* Tit. 1. v. 2. † 2 Tim. 2. 13.*

XII. Here it may be perhaps objected, If God does will that Sin be not committed ; and if his Will be powerful to effect whatever it pleases, it follows that it was, and still is, in the Power of God to have hindred its Event, or to extinguish it when committed. I answer assuredly, God was, and still is powerful to hinder Sin ; but this Power is, as to its Way or Method, to be regulated by his Will ; which is, that Sin be hinder'd, and his Graces given according to the Creatures Correspondence ; if the Creature Correspond, Sin will not be committed, or if committed, will be extinguish'd : But if the Creature refuse such a Correspondence as God requires, it is not then in the Power of God to hinder what the Creature wills, nor consequently the Event of Sin ; tho' infinitely odious to him, if the Creature wills it. *XII. In what Sense God can, and cannot hinder the Event of Sin.*

XIII. As to the Power of Man, as far as any Light can be borrow'd from it, to give us true Notions of the Power of God ; it is to be consider'd, that as the Liberty, so likewise the Power of Man derives from God ; and that as the good Regulation of Liberty consists in its Conformity with, and Resignation to the Divine ; so the good Regulation of Power consists in its Resignation to it : And as Liberty can produce its Act, but not its Object ; so neither can Power relieve its Objects, tho' it produces its Acts and Efforts ; and if, consequently, it seek after any Object contrary to the Divine Establishment *XIII. Of the Power of Man, and of its Impertinence ; that none of them are to be attributed to God, which is more carefully avoided here than in other Writings.*



## Chap. VI.

blishment and Order, its Efforts and Desires are vain and ineffectual: And further, that as the Liberty of Man may neglect the Sovereign Being, and seek after inferior Objects; (which is in effect to tend towards Nothing :) So when the Efforts of his Power are applied and directed otherwise than God prescribes, they produce no Reality, but tend to Nothing. Now in these respects Power is to be denied of God, and one ought to say, God cannot act thus, or thus. 1. His Power cannot depend on the Will of Man, as they do make it, who pretend, that rather than suffer Sin to be committed, God should violate the Liberty of his Creatures, and deprive 'em of the Power of Self-Determination. 2. Nor can it conform it self to Man's Fancy; because Man's Fancy is not its true End and Moral. 3. Nor can it use vain and ineffectual Efforts, as would be the Case should Man not be Free and Self-determining, when God hath will'd he should be such. 4. Nor can it deny it self its Antecedent Representation and Act, and tend to the Annihilation of them, as it would by destroying Liberty; that Faculty, representative of God in so Noble, Lively, and Divine a Manner, formed and produced by that Power, on which it continually depends for its Subsistence, Nature, and its Powers.

And thus we see the Power of God cannot restrain Man's Liberty from acting as it pleases, and to say that God can do any of the four last mentioned things, is absurdly to confound the Creator, and the Creatures Power; whereas to deny them of God, is to attribute to him his Divine All-perfect Power, and to deny of it the Imperfections of the Power of Man.

XIV. The foregoing Truths illustrated by way of Opposition between God and the Devil.

XIV. To illustrate these things by way of Opposition. Good and Evil are directly contrary to one another. Things entirely Good or Evil act contrarily. God is entirely Good, the Devil entirely Evil. Evil is as contrary and opposite to the Nature and Will of God, as Good is to the Devil. Let us now consider a little this Opposition.

The

The Devil cannot be the cause of Good ; God cannot be the cause of Evil.

The Devil cannot Will, Decree, nor Approve the doing what is Good. God cannot Will, Decree, nor Approve the doing what is Evil.

The Devil does not consent to the Good that is done, nor God to the Evil that is done.

The Devil does all he can to hinder the doing Good ; God does his utmost to hinder Evil.

The Devil cannot hinder the doing Good, while Man doth Will the doing of it ; because he hath no Power over the Will of Man : Nor can God absolutely hinder the Commission of Sin, tho' he wills the preventing of it ; because Man is created to be free : To force his Will, is not according to the Divine Establishment. His Power doth not extend to the Destruction of his Works, as Liberty is ; nor can he Will the contrary to what he hath establish'd.

Tho' the Devil does not will Good, but endeavours to hinder it all he can ; nevertheless, if Man does will it, it will happen whether he will or not ; so, tho' God does not will Evil, yet, if Man does will it, it will happen against the Will or Consent of God, who cannot deny himself, nor retract his own Establishment.

As whatever Good does happen the Devil is not advantaged by it, because he is not consenting, nor any ways Instrumental to it : So, whatever Evils happen, God's Holiness and Perfection are untainted, because he is not Consenting, nor at all Instrumental to it.

In fine, as the Devil is not less free or powerful in the Element of Evil, tho' he cannot prevent the doing Good, in respect of which alone he is Impotent ; so tho' God cannot absolutely and irresistibly hinder Sin, without the Concurrence of the Liberty of Man ; he is not less free or powerful in Realities. He is only Impotent to tend to Nothing, to annihilate Realities, or to destroy the Work and Counsel of his Will. He is powerful to produce Realities to Infinity, to do every thing that is Good and Real ;  
but

Chap. VI. but not to deny himself, or retract the Determinations of his Counsel. The Works which the Pure, Infinite, Indeterminate Power of God produced, he cannot ruin or destroy, because such a Destruction would be a denial of himself, argue not Power, but Weakness and Inconsistency in God. So then because God's Almighty Power cannot oppose it self, he cannot deprive Man of the Principle of Liberty and Self-determination; it being a Gift of God to Man, Irrevocable, and to be employ'd in an Infinite and most Noble Manner, about such Objects as God presents; from which if Man do disapply it, God doth not retract his Gift, but is no way accessary to Man's abuse: And as God is infinitely Happy and Perfect in himself; as his Blessedness receives not the least Improvement from any Creature: As in their Creation he propos'd their Happiness purely; it is plain, if the Creature refuse to correspond to God, his Blessedness will not be lessen'd or interrupted by it; and therefore to correspond is only the Creatures Interest and Concern, which if they refuse to do, the Almighty Power of God can easily raise up others to fulfill the Designs of his eternal Counsel.

## C H A P. VII.

*That Sin is the Effect of Liberty. Three Difficulties concerning Liberty, relating to God and Sin.*

I. That Sin is wholly the Creatures Work, an effect of the Abuse of Liberty.

I.



find its Cause, and who will own it as its Off-spring? It is the Off-spring of a sinful Creature, of his Conception,

INCE Sin is repugnant unto God, and to all his Attributes, to his Conception, Decrees, Will, Consent, and to all their Acts and Operations. Whence then is it? If every thing in God answer, it is not in me: Where shall we



ception, Counsel, Will, Act ; it is, in a word, the Chap. VII.  
Conduct of Liberty towards an Object (as an End) which God hath not appointed to be its End : And here is the proper place to answer the Difficulties \* Book I.  
mentioned, but left undecided in the \* foregoing c. 18. 1.  
Book.

II. In the first place 'tis ask'd, since Liberty is the II. The  
Gift of God bestow'd on Man on purpose to be im-first Diffi-  
ployed and directed towards that infinite Good which culty ; if  
he offers to it, is it possible for it to oppose God's Liberty  
Will, and act contrary to his Design ? Is not God could resist  
Almighty to make himself obeyed ? Can the Crea- God, who  
ture resist the Creator's Will, whereon it depends did not  
entirely ? This very Objection was heretofore made will Sin.  
to S. Prudence.

*Invitone aliquis potis est peccare Tonante,  
Cui facile est in corde hominis componere sensus  
Quos libeat, fibrasque omnes animare pudicis  
Pulsibus, & totum venis infundere honestum ?*

i. e. Can any Sin against the Almighty's Will, he who  
can easily inspire the Heart of Man with what  
Thoughts he pleases, breath Purity into his Soul,  
and fill him with all sort of Virtues. This Objection  
he answers in the Verses \* asofecited,

\* Book I.  
c. 16. 23.

*Nescis stulte tua vim Libertatis, ab ipso  
Formatore datam,*

But having transcribed the whole Passage in the Place  
referr'd to, my Reader may look back, and peruse  
it ; tho' I add moreover, that if by resisting the Will  
of God, be understood an absolute and entire defeat  
of its Accomplishment, it is impossible to resist it in  
this Sense, because the Liberty of Man hath no power  
to govern or controul the Will of God ; tho' it  
may resist, or rather not consent to God in things  
which he hath subjected to his Liberty, and from  
which he requires nothing against the Consent or  
Will of Man.

III. These

Chap. VII. III. These Truths are so clear, that every one may understand 'em. I will however endeavour to represent 'em in a Light and Evidence more convincing. I observe then that in God's Design or Will there is, first, something Absolute, viz. He absolutely wills the Existence of free Creatures to take their Delights eternally with him; and this Design is unchangeable and firm; no opposition of Earth or Hell can hinder its Execution; no, not tho' Millions of Creatures should combine in opposing God, and damn themselves. God's Power is Infinite, and if some oppose he can easily raise up new Creatures, till at last they correspond and concur in his Designs. I observe in the second place, that there is in the Design of God a Conditional Clause on the Creature's part; which is the Intervention of his free Consent or Will, without which this Design will be defeated. For this Condition is fix'd by God, and therefore cannot be altered or reversed. But as all free Creatures are call'd to enter into this Design, and are to have part therein, by means of a Concurrence, which they are free to give or to deny, and so freely to admit or reject the supreme Felicity; they are in this respect capable of resisting God, *i. e.* the free admission of the Divine Beatitude. But tho' they may reject that Salvation which God proposes to their Acceptance, they cannot defeat his general Design of having happy Creatures; nor the Rule by which Happiness is to be dispens'd, viz. the free Intervention of the Creature; properly speaking they can only reject their own part in it: As a Man who shuts his Eyes against the Light, or withdraws from the heat of the Sun-beams, does not so properly resist the Sun's Light or Beams, as his own free Admission of them.

In a Word, the Creature can resist God only, as God hath made him to participate of his Blessedness by Choice and Freedom: In which sense the Scriptures often complain of Mens resisting God, of their being disobedient, rebellious, and opposing his Designs. It is indeed the only Source of all our Misery; and, as if we did not thus oppose God's Will,

Will, he would have no reason to complain of us; Chap. VII. so if we had not Power to oppose it, the Divine Prohibitions, Commands, Threatnings, Exhortations, Rewards, Punishments, would be Ridiculous and Vain; tho', by the way, I can't but say, it is no little surprize that any should put us upon proving, that Man can resist God, to silence their Murmurs and Complaints.

IV. Now, true it is, that God is powerful to make IV. *Brute* himself obeyed; but then his Power doth not ex- *Creatures* tend to force free Agents, or deprive of Liberty *only are* Creatures designed to act in a Sphere of Freedom. *made to* Brute Creatures do indeed obey him in this Man- *obey God* ner. Their Actions are determin'd from a Principle *by con-* without; but this sort of Obedience is Inconsistent *straints* with the Notion of free Creatures, whom God is not so properly said to make to obey, as to endue with Power to obey. Accordingly he exhorts 'em to Obedience, that his blessed Designs may be accomplish'd in them.

V. It is also true, that tho' the Creature hath no V. *In* thing but from the Creator's Will, it can however *what* resist his Will; not that to which it owes its Being and *Sense the* Natural Perfections; but that which offers Beatify- *Creature* ing Objects to its free Acceptance: And this, as it is *can, or,* Self-evident, so we are, I think, generally agreed up- *cannot* on, tho' some pretend an Exception to it. Man can, *resist the* say they, resist God's Grace, but cannot overcome it, *Creator's* *Will.* *Obniti gratia potest, superare eam non potest.* I answer, this Objection, as it makes but little against us, so it seems to ruin their own Hypothesis, as will appear by considering, that Grace can then only be said to be resisted by us, when it is offer'd to, and endeavours to effect a Change upon us. The Devil, tho' he Sin continually, cannot be said to reject God's Grace, it being not offer'd to him: So if we suppose that Grace is not presented to certain Persons, nor makes any Influence or Impression on them, in order to their Conversion, they can't be said to resist God's Grace; tho' perhaps they may, certain external Means of their Conversion, which we are not here concern'd with. We must therefore suppose a Subject upon which God continually



**Chap. VII.** continually sheds abroad his Gracious Influences, in order to convert or operate on it, and to say it can resist this Grace, is to say it can maintain its Ground against it; not resign it self to it, or defeat its effect upon it, which seems to be a formal disavowing of their Doctrine, and an avowing the Truth, as maintain'd by us. The other part of their Exception, One cannot overcome God's Grace, is true, but makes nothing against us. Tho' one refuse to admit or yield to God's gracious Operation on us; Grace cannot be said to be overcome, as the Light of the Sun cannot by him who shuts his Eyes, or by the darkness of a place from which it is excluded. Should a Man of well-dispos'd Organs, open his Eyes, and not be enlightened by it, one might say indeed the darkness did overcome the Light.

But now to teach, that one may overcome God's Grace, what is it we mean by it? Why, it is to teach that tho' one hath received the Grace and Spirit of God, and is numbred among his Children; yet Nature is so frail that one can't accomplish God's Commandments, nor lead a sinless Life; but that the root of Sin still lives in a Regenerate Heart, so that during this Life, whatever Graces God vouchsafe us, one can't avoid sometimes committing, not only Venial, but even Mortal Sins, that subject one to eternal Death. This is properly what is understood by overcoming the Grace of God. To teach that Sin prevails against it, even in a Regenerate Soul, where Grace predominates. This Doctrine I shall have occasion to treat of hereafter, and pass to the second Difficulty, or eighth in order mentioned above.

**VI. Another Difficulty against the unlimitedness of Liberty.** That this Objection is unreasonable and excessive, and leads to Libertinism.

**VI.** Was Man it is said endued with Liberty and a Power freely to Conduct himself, it would be lawful for him to exercise this Power, and actuate it as he pleased, without Sin. Mankind would then be bound to no Law besides that universal one of doing what they pleased. For why should God create a free and unlimited Being, and afterwards restrain him by Laws? Does not this suppose him inconsistent in his Conduct, by depriving his Creatures of the Gifts he bestows upon them? Now they who urge this Difficulty,

culty, I desire them to consider its tendency, and for what End and Design they urge it ; whether, 1. To impute our Sins to God, or to Necessity. Or, 2. In favour of Libertinism and Prophaneness. Or, 3. For Dispute and Contradiction sake : They who make this Objection will find themselves unavoidably press'd with these Inconveniencies ; so that tho' the Opinion which they oppose were false, their Objection will be notwithstanding Impious and Prophane. For if Man be not a Free, Self-determining Agent, as they won't allow, how then shall we account for Sin ? It must of necessity be from Fate, or Necessity, or the Direction of a Superior Being ; or else all Actions must be indifferent, and the Notion of Sin impossible and absurd. Where there is no Liberty, there for certain is no Fault ; and where no Fault, no Sin. On this Foundation Libertinism stands. But if our Objectors dare maintain neither the necessity of the Fatalists, nor the indifference of Libertines they will be obliged to own, that they blindly run themselves into an Abyss of Errors, from a desire of Contradiction.

VII. But to give this Objection a positive Answer, I say, tho' God hath given the intelligent Creature Liberty and Power to Conduct it self ; yet this is to be applied to only the Element of Good, in which he was Created ; and not to that of Sin, which then was not, not even in an Idea. Good was the proper Object and Design of Liberty, tho' it was in the Creature's Power, either not to imploy it in, or direct it to its true, proper, and perfective Objects. Liability was essential to him, but not considered as God's Creature, as hath been observed ; and supposing the Creature to have had from God no Temptation to deviate from him ; but on the contrary, to have always an infinitely perfect Object presented to him, and Liberty to prefer and fix upon it, it might, it is clear, have lived and acted in the Element of Good, without committing Sin, or even a possibility of sinning while it moved therein ; whereas, when leaving this Element, it moved towards an Object, for which it was not designed, it transgress'd the laws of its End,

VII This Objection answered: Liberty tho' unlimited, is not without Order or End.

*Chap. VII.* and Nature, and consequently sinned, by descending from the Element in which it was created, and ought to have lived and acted.

*VIII. Tho' the Estate in which Liberty is plac'd by God be infinite and unlimited; it does not extend to Sin.* VIII. Had Man continued in that State of Liberty wherein he was originally plac'd by God, he could not have sinned. For God set him in the midst of infinite Goods, or the infinity of the Divine Perfections, with Liberty to Contemplate and Adore them as he pleased; to admire alternately the Divine Attributes, Decrees, Designs, Ideas, Images, and in them to celebrate the Author of all Perfection.

They who are in this Element are free from Laws: Nothing is commanded them, or forbidden; but all things are lawful to them; nor can they Sin; tho' if they descend here-from, as Man, by reason of his Lability, may they Sin, and become subject to the Law, a Law not to restrain or destroy their Liberty; but to shew 'em what is, and what is not the true Element of Good in which God hath plac'd them, and what Objects God wills they should be exercis'd about.

*IX. Laws are not given to deprive us of, or to bound our Liberty.* IX. So that Liberty still acts in a boundless Sphere, notwithstanding the seeming restraint from the Laws of God. Liberty still acts according to its Nature, the design of Laws being only to take it off from false, unsuitable and unworthy Ends and Objects; tho' Liberty may break thro' these Laws, and fix on these unworthy Objects. But in so doing it transgresses the Laws of its Design and End; tho' not of Liberty, which consider'd as a Principle of free Action, is subject to no Law, and as such cannot transgress. To transgress the Law of Liberty is to act by force, and to be determin'd by Constraint which Liberty cannot, whether it act in the Element of Good or Evil.

*X. Sin comes from Liberty, which being infinite in Nature and End, limits its Act to a finite Object.* X. Had Liberty no end proposed to it, or were it its own End like the Divine, it would then be incapable of sinning; considered as Liberty, or as a Power of free Activity, it cannot Sin, because whatever pursues the Order of its Nature cannot Sin. But, tho' thus consider'd it be incapable of sinning; yet considered, as made to a certain End, viz. for God, it

Sins,



Sins, if it depart from God, and fix on another End : Chap. VII.  
It is Liberty alone that departs from God, who made it free and indetermin'd, as well because its Nature is Divine, as to qualifie it freely to chuse and delight it self among God's infinite Perfections: And so this noble Faculty may extend its Acts beyond the Law of its infinite End, or, to speak more properly, it may stop short; instead of fixing on the All-perfect Object, it may take up with mean and unworthy ones, and therefore it is Liberty alone that Sins, violating the essential Laws of its infinite End, for which it is made, when the Consideration of that End, and its own infinite unlimited Nature, should carry it beyond that Object at which it stops.

XI. It will be ask'd perhaps: Why was our Liberty designed to an End? Or why hath God made himself its End? Why was it not left without an End, or allowed to chuse one for it self, either it self or any Creatures? These are indeed pretty Questions. I ask thee, O poor, blind Creature! Can God act as a Fool, without Reason, or Design, or End? Can he, the only source of Light and Blessedness, deny himself, and send us to derive our Happiness from another Spring, in which it is not to be found? Does he set bounds to Liberty, when he gives it an infinite End and Object, infallibly to be attained, if Liberty do not bound its Powers by fixing on finite Objects? Would we know why God hath formed it to an End? It is because the infinitely Wise cannot deny himself, nor act foolishly without an End. Would we know why he hath made himself its End? it is because he is alone the absolute, real Being; because he designed it to be happy, and being himself the only Spring of Good, himself alone could make it so; because he could not destine it to Evil, Privation, Darkness, nor consequently ordain either itself or any Creature as the End of Liberty, they being in themselves Sources of Darkness and Vanity only. In a word, it is because Liberty in itself is infinite, and God could not but propose a suitable, *i. e.* an infinite Object to it. And have we any Cause to complain of God for this? Had Liberty been its own, or any Creatures been

XI. As Liberty could not be without an End: So it must have an infinite one.

*Chap. VII.* ordained to be its End, God, hereby, would have obliged it to depart from infinite Excellence and Perfection; to prefer and esteem most, what is less lovely, to acquiesce and delight in Vanities more than in Realities and Perfections, which are too visibly absurd, to be the Conduct of the infinitely Wise.

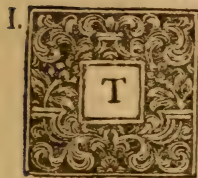
Nothing is more clear and certain than that if God had made either Liberty it self or any Creature to be its End. He would himself have been neglected and despised by it. His Work would have been made to bear false Testimony of his Essential Nature; and Liberty would have been a very limited Good, by being confined to finite Objects and a narrow Sphere.

*XII. That God hath not given occasion to Sin by enduing his Creatures with Liberty.* XII. This, I think, does fully answer the last pretended Difficulty, tho' it is further urged. If Man could Sin by the Exercise of Liberty, then God who endued him with it, was the occasion of his Sin. I answer, This Objection can only be made by Impious Men, that seek occasion of accusing God. Was the contrary Opinion true, and was there no such thing as Liberty and a Self-determining Power, one might with more Reason reflect on God; because it would follow hence, not only that God hath given occasion to his Creatures, but necessitated them to Sin, by not giving them Liberty, but subjecting all things to Necessity and Fate. Man, as hath been observed, cannot Sin while he keeps his Liberty within that Element, wherein it was originally plac'd by God; in it are no occasions of committing Sin, but only of doing Good. But if we will call every thing an occasion unto Sin, without which it had not been committed, not Liberty only, but Life and Being, nay Goodness it self must be occasions of it. For had Man not been endued with Life, and a Spiritual Nature, he had not been capable of sinning. Or if God had not been Good, had not infinite Power and Goodness vouchsaf'd to Intelligent Creatures, the Nature with which they are endued, they could not then have sinned. It is very unjust to call God the occasion of our Sins, because the Nature of Things are establish'd by him, and because without these Na-  
tures

tures Sin had not been committed. Only such things are properly Occasions of it, as are misapply'd and misemploy'd by the Creature; not such as are given by God, and constituted for a good Design and End. The Sun proved to many Heathens an Occasion of Idolatry; but it cannot be said, that God created it to be an Occasion of it. It is an Occasion of Idolatry as it is abused by Man, not as it is created by God. In like manner Man, by abuse, hath made his Liberty an occasion of committing Sin, but God, who created it, gave no occasion to it. From him comes nothing but Good, Holiness, Purity and Perfection; nor can any Creature, when it Sins, say he was the Occasion of it.

## CHAP. VIII.

### A General Account of the Manner in which Sin was Committed.



I. **T**HE Creature being, notwithstanding all God's Preventing Graces, naturally Labile, as hath been already proved at large; and being capable of Sinning, and of departing from its End by Free-will: By putting this Will in Act and Execution, it gives birth at once to the Idea and Existence of this Monster Sin: Or rather, the will itself is it, considered as not turned towards its End, and not directing its Faculties thereto: We must not here confound the Will which is Sin, with the Reflex Intentional Will of Sinning. Great Difference there is between the Act of Sin, and the Reasons or Motives of it, which are not the Sin itself, but Inducements to it; there being none, not even the Devil himself, who Sins for sinnings sake. There are always some specious reasons, some motives, Solicitations, Temptations, and Appearances of Good

I. Sin is in the Will, but not in a Will that simply Wills Sin; but in a Will attracted by Allurements tho' culpable notwithstanding.



Chap. VIII. that allure the Sinner, and this is so generally true, that it seems ridiculous to imagine either Men or Devils to have sinned, without some Motives of this Nature. But seeing these Motives and Allurements, however specious and real they appeared, were infinitely inferior to the pleasure and Delight of the Divine enjoyments: Seeing God was seen and tasted in his Luminous, Delectable, Attracting, preventing Graces, as an infinite All perfect good, a Mind thus illuminated by his Grace, and endued with Liberty of Nature, sins, if it depart from the infinitely perfect Object, and cleave to imperfect ones, as if the less perfect exceeded in Excellence and Perfection, as its Application to one and Disapplication to the other speaks.

II. *Two Difficulties concerning the possibility of the Event of Sin.*

II. Now since all was good before the Event of Sin, since every thing represented God, and sent us to him, by its Natural Tendency and Aspiration, it is difficult to conceive, what did, or indeed what could tempt or allure to Sin: Or how an Illuminated Creature could turn away from an infinite Good presented to it, and cleave to a faint and imperfect one, the enjoyment whereof would be certainly attended with Endless Misery.

III. *That before the Fall the Creature had no knowledge, nor Idea of Sin; nor of its Effects: Tho' it wanted no knowledge necessary to its Felicity.*

III. In answering these Difficulties, I will first begin with that which is last in Order; and here I observe, that tho' the Creature was illuminated, yet before it sinn'd, it had no knowledge or perception of that Deep Abyss of Darkneſs, Torment, Misery, which the forsaking God, and fixing upon vain imperfect Objects would inevitably plunge it in. For this Misery not existing even in Idea, as I have shewed, could not be actually perceived by it: The illuminated Creature clearly saw that God was its End, that he was the true Source of Light and Blessedness, which should in reason have kept it Faithful to him. But the Miseries necessarily attending its Separation from him were not conceived, nor indeed conceivable, because as yet they were a Nothing, without Idea, or Form. It had as yet no Idea of Privation, it being not existent, nor yet decreed, and therefore not possible to be conceived before the Creature had actually

actually will'd it. Before, I say, the Creature's will had forsaken God, and apply'd to unlawful Objects, there was no Idea of Sin, nor of the Miseries attendant on it. And this, as the History of the Fall confirms of Man: So the reasons just now produced prove it in respect of Angels too, tho' neither Men, nor Angels were deny'd any necessary Grace to prevent their Fall. God could not give his Creatures an Idea of Sin, when he had it not himself: They Lived in an Element of Light and pure Delight, and were continually refresh'd with the sweetness of it, they saw that God was the Essential Spring from whence it flow'd upon 'em, and this should have engaged them inseparably to adhere to him.

Chap. VIII.

IV. If now the Creature had no Sentiment or Idea of the Miseries, which, fixing on any Created Object would plunge it in, it was not impossible for it to withdraw its application from God, and to fix it upon a Creature: As, we see, 'tis not impossible for ourselves, to pursue ways and things, which we never should if we saw or felt before the Consequences of them.

IV. That it is not impossible for a Creature that is ignorant of the Effect of Sin to

fix on an Object, that may prove an unhappy occasion of involving it in them.

V. It is moreover to be remembred, that the free Creature's Application being at its own Disposal, to be dispens'd in what measure and degree it pleases, it may fix it, either intirely, or in part, on Objects, as it will. Supposing therefore an Imperfect Object to present its allurements to it, the Soul can yield the whole, or principal, of its application to it. She is Mistress of it, to dispense it as she pleases, and if she yield it to an Imperfect Object, she ceases to think on God; or else the Divine perception becomes less lovely to her: The Light and Attracts Divine become less sensible and moving: Application to Inferiour Objects darkens the mind, and dulls its perception in respect of God; while, in respect of its New Object, it becomes more quick and sensible, God, gradually falling into Sin and Death. The Gradation of this.

V. If a free Creature dispense its application to Objects that are not God, as in virtue of Liberty it may, it becomes thereby darkened and less sensible to

Chap VIII and forsaking God, unites itself to it more and more.

If now this Object was Evil in itself, the relish of it would be bitter to the Soul, and so there would be no danger of ingaging its affections on it: But because it is, in its Nature, Good; Representative of God in its Being and Constitution, the Injoyment of it is relishing and sweet, as of realities and perfections given by God.

And the pleasure and Sweetness found in its Injoyment, do naturally more and more fix its application to it: Hence God becomes more disunited; and his infinite Lights and Graces less moving and affecting; till at last an Habitual application to this pleasing Object, and a firm resolution of fixing on, and of seeking Satisfaction and Contentment in it, as its proper End, render it wholly insensible to God: Whereupon the Divine Light and Grace begins to fail the Creature, or, more properly, tho' the Creature deserve to have it fail, it sollicitly a free Admission into his Heart, tho' the Soul, hardened by free, repeated Disapplication from it, is not touch'd or affected by it. But God continues a good while knocking at the Heart; he causes it to hear his Voice whether it will or not, till upon a full and peremptory refusal to co-operate, God totally withdraws his Luminous Graces, whereupon the Soul is plunged in Darkness, and all those Objects to which it apply'd itself, and which were before obedient to it, and received the Divine Light and Benediction through it, do change their Nature, and from Luminous and perfect, become Dark and Empty; and the Soul not finding, as before, its pleasure in them, changes its application and delight into Darkness and Disgust, every thing falling into a state opposite to that of its Original Constitution, in which the Creature being completely happy, it necessarily becomes, in this, that is contrary thereto, as miserable as it was happy.

VI. *This method*

VI. And thus we see in general how Sin was effectually committed both by Men and Angels: It begins in Gradation proved by Scripture.

Distraction



Distraction, and Disapplication from God; continues and is strengthened by the Delight and Pleasure found in the Object that Distracts; and is perfected and confirm'd by a resolute consummate Will of fixing on it: The fruits whereof are Darkness, Misery, and Death. This method or Gradation is briefly and excellently described by St. James, *when Lust* [i.e. Our desire of, and Application to some Created Object,] *hath conceived* [taken Delight in its Objects] *it brings forth Sin*, [it produces a complete resolution of being distract from God our true end and Felicity,] *and Sin being completed* [this Evil Application being hardened and confirmed, and God having expected its conversion during the time appointed for Patience,] *brings forth Death*. The Creature falls into Darkness and eternal Misery, God then withdrawing his Light and Gracious Influence.

VII. It now remains only to consider what those Objects were to which the Creature might apply itself, to take off its application unto God, and what Temptations and Allurement might be presented before the Fall: Which being an inquiry of great Importance I request the Attention of my Reader.

*Creature might be exposed before the Fall.*

VIII. It hath been demonstrated above, that God alone and the Divine Essence are all perfect, Self-sufficient, exclusive of all other Ideas; but that the Intelligent Creature must of necessity have at least two Objects and Ideas, viz. the perception of itself [it being a living Intelligent Being] and also the Idea of God more sublime than the Rational Idea of him. The first of these was necessary, as being the Foundation of its Nature: The second, as being its Accomplishment and Perfection as well as its Principle and Source. As necessary therefore as it is for every Intelligent Spirit to have a proper End and Nature: So necessary it is for them to have these two Ideas.

Moreover if we suppose, Angels and Men, or either of them to be created, to rule and govern other Creatures, they must have besides the Ideas of all those Creatures, which they were designed to govern:

Here

Chap. VIII. Here then we see not only three sorts of Objects, God, ourselves and the World about us, and each of them endued with infinite Faculties peculiar to itself; but one of them, *viz.* the World perceivable in three different ways, Imagination, Reason, Sentiments and Ideas both of External Sense and Internal Passion.

IX. An Introduction to the different Manners in which Sin was committed. What is meant by Sins differing in kind and in Degree.

IX. Now in order to give a radical and distinct Account, how both Men and Angels sinned, and how their Sins do differ in kind and in degree; Let it be supposed that the Angel had only the Idea of God and of himself, and perhaps his Fellow Angels: And that Man had Ideas of God, himself, and of the Universe. I do not absolutely determine if the Angel had the Idea of the Material World, or if any Creatures were subjected to him: Whatever reasons I have to believe he had, I do here suppose the contrary in order to conceive more distinctly the Different Degree and kind of the Sin committed by Man and Angels.

I call of Sins a Different kind, when they differ in their General Objects, as are the Idea of one self and of the Universe.

And then I understand Sins to be of a Different Degree according as the Application is more or less fixt upon these Objects; more Constant, Frequent and Resolved, from whence arise the Different Degrees of both one and the other sort, and of every Inferiour Species of them.

X. A particular Deduction of the Nature

X. If the Schoolmen would see the whole Predicament of Sin in their method and way of Art, it is thus I do deduce it.

and Species of Sin. A passage in St. John explained.

Sins *Summum Genus* is a Voluntary Disapplication from God, its two Principal Species are, 1. Application to Self. 2. Application to the World, *i. e.* Spiritual Self-love or Pride, and Love of the World or Concupiscence: Which last may be divided into two Inferiour Species, according to the twofold relation which Man hath unto the World. 1. By simple Ideas formed by the Activity of Reason and Imagination. 2. By the Sentiments of Sense and Passion; one of which

which is call'd the Lust of the Eyes; (being an undue Chap.VIII Application or Imployment of Reason and Imagination about the Objects of this Worldly System) the other, the Lust of the Flesh (being an undue Application of our Senses and Passions to these Objects:) And thus we see the three Capital Sins in their first Origin and Source are, are the Pride of Life, (or of a Thought that considers and admires itself, its own Being and Subsistence) the Lust of the Eyes, and of the Flesh, from which the beloved Disciple of our Lord, exhorts all who would continue Friends of God to abstain. \* *My little Children, love not the World, nor the things that are in the World: If any Man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the World, the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not of the Father, (it is a Disapplication from God) but of the World; (wherein is included the love of self, self being a part of the World.) Now the World passes away, and the Lust thereof; (these things do only tickle the surface of the Soul, but cannot satisfy its interior Desires; and besides, that little Pleasure and Delight which they afford, will quickly vanish away for ever, when the great Separation shall be made of Good and Evil;) but he who doth the Will of God abideth for ever; (he is always fill'd with interior, solid, refreshing Pleasures and Delights, as is the Will of God the inexhaustible Spring of Happiness and Joy.)* Moreover, these three Sins contain under them an infinity of Particulars differing in Degree, in Strength and Habitude, and attended with different Degrees of Darkness and Eternal Misery. Here then we see a World of Darkness as fruitful in its cursed Barrenness and Misery, as the World of Light is in Reality, and blessed they who shall never know it by a wretched, miserable Experience.

XI. Let us now consider what there could possibly be in Objects before the Event of Sin, to sollicit and attract the Application of an Intelligent Creature, according to the Degree of their Reality and Perfection. An Object endued with but little Reality and Perfection, endeavours to conform it to that little.

XI. Ob-  
jects make  
Impression  
upon the



Chap. VII

\* Oecon.  
of the  
Creat. ch.  
7. 3, 4.

ture to fix upon it. To conceive this Matter, it is necessary to remember what hath been demonstrated in the \* foregoing Book, viz. that every thing tends to communicate it self to others (especially to Man, as being more particularly related to him) endeavouring to imprint on them the Character of its own Perfections, and to the utmost of its Power to assimilate all others to it. This is an unalienable Property of every thing which God creates, it tends to communicate its resemblance to whatever it shines upon; and it is not its fault if others be not transformed into its likeness, by the force of its Natural Activity, which if it be alone, and the subject on which it acts, does not resist its influence, and suppress the Impressions of other Objects, is sufficient to transform into it self, the Object on which it acts; but much more if it does not only not resist, but assist and increase its influence on it: But we need not suppose so much, it is sufficient that it is a general Property of Nature for Objects to make Impression upon all about them, tending to assimilate them to themselves: So that an Object of little Reality and Perfection endeavours by its Impressions to attract the Application of the Intelligent Creature, to resist the Power of Intelligence, Imagination and Sense upon its poor Realities; it draws it I say to fix and center on it such as it is, whether of a more or less perfect Nature, it being impossible it should attract to greater Realities than it is possess'd of.

XII. That  
this way  
of Impres-  
sion is na-  
tural, ne-  
cessary,  
and not  
Evil in  
itself, pro-  
vided  
the Im-  
pressions  
be receiv'd  
according

XII. Thus things in Nature necessarily act; nor is there any Evil in it: It cannot indeed be otherwise for Reasons already mentioned: Because, 1st. There is a Natural and a Necessary Connexion between this Object and this Subject: Because, 2dly. This Object tends (according to the general Property of Nature) to Communicate, Multiply, and Represent it self, and to assimilate others to it: Because, 3dly. It can't Communicate or Imprint greater Perfections than it has. And that this Order in it self is good, appears in that every thing in Nature, however mean it be, is a Portraiture of God; and if according to the Order and Establishment of God.

the

the thing on which any Object makes Impression, Chap VIII  
receives it without prejudice to other Images of God, and above all, do not dishonour the Original of all Perfection; then all is well: It may lawfully receive the Impressions of every Creature; it may relish and enjoy them, provided it carry up its Application, Desire and Love to its Divine Original, and so use them to that End for which they were created, viz. that Creatures indued with Reason and Intelligence may relish and see the Divine Perfections imaged in them. But if this Creature turns its Application, Love, Desire and Acquiescence away from God towards his Creatures, he injures the Original of all Perfection, and extinguishes in his Soul, and in the Objects of his Abuse, God's gracious Influence, he sees God no more, whom he hath not sought, but becomes more and more separate from him, and falls into Darkness and Death.

XIII. It is not impossible for a Creature to receive Impressions, Sollicitations and Ideas from the Creatures, and remain still fix'd on God; or to apply it self to one without being distracted from the other. These things are well consistent: It was not only possible and easie to eye the Creator in a simple, general and uniform Manner, while it was applied particularly to Contemplate and injoy the Creature's Beauties; but also to receive and relish the Divine Impressions, while thus applied particularly to the Creatures. The Creature's Capacity was then Immense, and Large, and almost Infinite; the Eye of its Attention might easily have been fix'd steddy on the Creator, as its End, and all Things have been seen by and in him in an eminent way: For from him, as Rays from the Sun, all come, and to him they return as means directing to him as to our only End: And so the Intelligent Creature might have seen it self as one of the brightest Rays, and most excellent Means, and have loved and cherished it self for the sake of its adorable End, and well-beloved, endeavouring, by a Conformity to his most holy Will, to preserve and qualifie it self for his Injoyment; and thus we may conceive how the Impressions of God, of

XIII. That  
a Creature might  
receive  
together  
Impressi-  
ons from  
God, &c  
itself, and  
its fellow  
Crea-  
tures, and  
not be dis-  
tracted  
from God.

Chap. VIII of our selves, and of the Universe might be received together without Sin or Disorder.

*XIV. The Creature might also receive their Impressions separate, in the Order of God.* XIV. Their Impressions might also be received separate in a very good Manner, and according to the Order and Establishment of God. The Intelligent Creature was capable of receiving the Divine Attracts and Impressions separate from any Creaturely Impressions. From these it had Power wholly to abstract, and resign its Application intirely unto God. This is the most Noble and Sublime Degree of Love and Contemplation. It was also capable to receive the Impressions of the Creator and it self, without any from the Creatures of the Universe, and to refer its own to the Creator, by an entire Devotion of its Being, Duration, Power, Activity, Love, Knowledge and all its other Qualities to him, by considering them only as Streams out-flowing from the Spring of his inexhaustible Love, that tend and return to him, in and for which it ought to praise him, and to be as it were swallowed up in the Love and Admiration of his great Perfections as its only End. In fine, the Impressions of God, and of the Universe might be received without its own, without any Intellectual, Reflexive Sentiment of itself ; and moreover in the Knowledge and Injoyment of the Creator it might have perceived and tasted the Perfections of the Creature. For the Contemplation of God, and of the Divine Perfections, is the true Key to open the Knowledge of the Creatures, with the Taste and Injoyment of all their Charms and Attracts ; and to unlock the deep and most hidden Treasures of Heaven and Earth. It is the Clue which whoever follows, will be sure not to be lost in the infinite variety of the Works of God. Let him only take care, in his Walks among them, to have God continually in his sight, to fix upon and to adhere to him ; let him learn habitually to refer every thing to God, and to present to him all Creaturely Delights and Injoyments, considering that as we owe them to his Love and Bounty : So we ought chiefly to acknowledge and adore him in them.



XVI. Here for certain Sin begins; it is impossible to trace it higher, or to go deeper in search thereof. Above it we see nothing but pure Reality: Below it pure Nothing: The free Creatures actual Disapplication or Distraction from God, is therefore its first and only Source: Here Sin's Idea and Existence was first conceived, decreed and will'd; and the pleasure felt in the Object of Distraction is its Generation or Conception; and the Will or Resolution to repeat its Application to it, is the perfect formation of this Decree; and the Extinction of the Divine Light and Graces which passed from God into this distracting Object thro' the Channel of the Intelligent Creature. This Extinction of whatever is Good that follows the Creature's cursed Decree, or full form'd Resolution is the Accomplishment of this deadly Monster, without Form or Light, or any Divine Feature: Then is brought forth Eternal Death; and the Creature, because the Objects of its Distraction are a Source of Darkness and Confusion, without any mixture of Goodness, Light or Pleasure, accuses God, the Source of all Good, as if he enviously or grudgingly denied his Graces, whence proceeds hatred of him, with Blasphemy and Cursing: Here is the Consummation of Sin and Death, from which there is no hope of Remedy or Return; and if we see the Effect, not of the Divine Decree or Will, but the Fruit of the Creature's Thoughts; if Sin be traced backwards from its full Accomplishment and Resolution to its first Conception in Distraction.

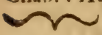
XVII. Be it then well observed by us, that all Sin hath its beginning in Distraction; not only when the Creature fell from its Original Holiness and Perfection into Impurity and Sin, but it is still fomented and encreased by it, and as the only way for our first Parents to have preserved themselves from Sin, had been to keep their Minds attentively fix'd on God, without straying from him: So now the way not to commit, or heal it when committed, is to keep him continually in our sight, and set him before us in whatever we do: If when things were in good Order, Distraction from God was of a Nature so Malignant

Chap. VIII

XVI. That Sin begins in Distraction; whence also all its Effects, and even Eternal Death, do naturally proceed.

XVII.

That the surest way to avoid Sin, is to avoid Distraction by a continual Application to, and regard of God.

Chan. VIII  lignant as to alter the State of things, and change the best and most useful Means into dangerous Snares how much more certainly, now that our Ways are all rough and dangerous, will he fall into Ruin, who, forsaking his Heavenly Guide, runs after every Object that fanſie ſuggeſts. \* *Lo, they that are far from thee ſhall periſh: Thou haſt deſtroy'd all them that go a whoring from thee: But it is good for me to draw near to God,* ſays the Pſalmiſt. A Divine and Important Truth, which, would we but take to Heart, how carefully ſhould we avoid the infinite Diſtractions to which we expoſe our ſelves, without keeping God preſent with us, tho' he mean while ſo lovingly court our Hearts. † *My Son give me thy Heart, and let thy Eyes obſerve my Ways.* We ſhould then keep God continually with us, we ſhould think of him with Delight and Love, make him the inſeparable Companion of our Heart: We ſhould live as in his ſight, and propoſe his Glory in whatever we deſire or undertake; and by thus walking with him, we ſhould deſire from him a Light and Strength ſufficient to guard us from Evil, and to enable us to do good. (a) *They looked unto him, and were lightened;* whereas without this every thing runs to ruin, how Good or Holy ſoever our Converſation be in the ſight of Men, who judge of Evil only by the external Signs: And he who before Men is as the Flower of Vertue, is oft times before God conſummate in Iniquity: We meaſure Sin by outward Signs, like Politicians, with whom no Man is puniſhable for his Thoughts; whereas, with God, the greateſt Wickedneſs is voluntarily to ceaſe from the Deſire and Contemplation of him: And thus the Scripture ſpeaks, where it gives us an Idea of Accompliſh'd Sinners. (b) *They have not God before their Eyes:* (c) *God is not in all his Thoughts:* (d) *They have done this or that, but not by me;* (e) *they have forgotten me:* (f) *They have turned their Back unto me, and not their Face.* And in many other Schemes of Speech it aſſures us, that Diſtraction from God doth not only produce and cheriſh, but is itſelf the blackeſt Guilt: Whereas on the contrary, it recommends the walking with God as the only Source of Happineſs

\* Pſ. 73.  
27, 28.

† Prov.  
23. 26.

(a) Pſ.  
34 v. 5.

(b) Pſ. 54.  
5.

(c) Pſ. 10.  
4.

(d) Hoſea  
8. 4.

(e) *Ibid.*  
v. 14.

(f) Jer.  
2. 27.

pinels and Virtue. \* *Walk before me, and be thou* Chap. VIII  
*Perfect.* † *Remember thy Creator.* Which Exhorta-  
tions being made to Men after the Event of Sin, ought  
in reason to convince us not only that it was our Duty  
to walk with God before that sad Event; but that it  
is also very possible after it, to preserve our Thoughts,  
Desires, Contemplation continually fixt upon him,  
even in the midst of the necessary occasions of this  
Life. Men are not distracted by their Princes Pre-  
sence; but on the contrary it incites 'em to labour  
with more Courage, Diligence and Delight, and  
guards 'em against a thousand Indecencies, Faults, Ne-  
glects, which they might otherwise be guilty of: In  
like manner the Thought of our being always seen and  
beheld of God is a powerful preservative from Sin;  
it is the best and Divinest Counsel to defend against  
Temptation, to keep ones Heart continually fixt up-  
on and aspiring to him. This as an inspired Writer  
tells us was the reason why *Moses* was not terrify'd  
by the Angry Tyrant. || *He saw him who is in-* || Heb. 11;  
*visible.* 27.

This was the habitual practice of Holy *David*, who  
sanctify'd prosperity, adversity, plenty, and even  
all Creatures to himself by turning his thoughts, and  
application with a fixed Eye on God, and conversing  
with him in the midst of Worldly Occupations and  
Injoyments. \* *I have kept God always before my Eyes,* \* Pl. 16.  
*and he is on my Right Hand, therefore I shall not Fall:* 8.  
*Wherefore my Heart was Glad, my Flesh also shall rest*  
*in safety.* † *My Heart hath said, seek ye my Face.* † Ps. 27.  
*Thy Face, Lord, will I seek: Hide not thy Face from*  
*Me: Nor cast thy Servant away in displeasure. Thou*  
*art my Saviour and my Redeemer, O leave me not, nor*  
*forsake me.*

Thus we have discovered the Source of Sin, and  
the General manner of its Commission: Let us next  
consider, the different Manner and Circumstances of  
the Fall of Man and Angels, after having premised  
something concerning the Conduct by which the good  
Angels were preserved from it.



## C H A P. IX.

## Of the Conduct of the Faithful Angels.

I. It is here supposed, that the Angel had only the Idea of God, and of himself.



THE Angel, who continued Faithful, had not greater, nor perhaps so great Advantages from God, as he who sinned. However, this is certain, that they were not, as some imagine, determin'd, some to Good, others to Evil. These Fictions have been already sufficiently confuted. I will now in brief describe the Conduct of God towards the Angel, who kept his Station on the foremention'd Supposition, viz. That he had no Idea or Perception of Material, or any other Objects, but God himself, and Angels like himself. Which Supposition shall be here divided into two; in the first of which the Angel shall be consider'd, as having Ideas only of God, and of himself. In the second, as having the necessary Ideas of other Angels.

II How the Angel, who is naturally dark and void, is illuminated and filled by God.

II. First, I suppose the Angel to have had the Idea of himself; which, as hath been proved, considered simply, and as fixing on itself, is naturally a void, dark, confuse, and painful Thing: But considered as turning towards God, is Illuminated and made Happy, by the Eradiations of his Light and Goodness; Which when they made Impression on him, offering themselves to his Acceptance, soliciting his Consent, Desire and Application, and alluring him to God, in order to transform him to the Heavenly Likeness: If then, I say, the Angel faithfully Corresponded, and, laying aside all Application to, and Reflection on himself, applied and abandoned his Faculties to God, the Life of God, or God himself was conceived in him, as was demonstrated in the forgoing Book.

III How the Angel,

III. Secondly, I observe, that the Faculties of the who continued faithful unto God, without Distraction, might attain a final Establishment in Happiness and Perfection, by following the bent of his Faculties Divine.

Angel were very sensible, and susceptible of Emotions : Had a lively, quick Perception of the Divine Impressions made upon them ; and sought naturally, and with Ardour, Goods agreeable to their Nature, or a Felicifying Light and Joy ; and moreover, that whilst his Faculties adher'd to God, he plainly saw that all his Faculties, and their luminous, tranquillizing Objects, were purely owing to God's Goodness, who is the sole Origin and End of all Reality and Perfection, and separate from whom, all Faculties are dark, empty, confuse, painful Things. This Conviction incited the Angel to adhere to God with all his Powers, and readily to seek in him, the Impressions of Light and Joy, to which his Faculties strongly did incline, as their proper Good, and to this Liberty consents, strait conducting towards God, and his alluring Divine Impressions, all its subject Faculties and Powers, as if it had thus answered their ardent Desires of Felicity and Joy. You solicit me to seek after Objects necessary to your support, and well Being, and to fill you with Light, Satisfaction and Contentment: I consent to satisfy your Desire. Lo, here is God. Come, O my Heart, O all my Faculties, receive him for your Nourishment, your all ; your Light, your Happiness, your Rest, your Delights, and your only Portion. Lo, here is your Creator, and your End, the only Source of Light and Bliss.

In this manner the Angel, while he remained faithful unto God, considered the Impressions of his Faculties, manifesting his Love to himself, and his natural Powers, by conducting them to God, offering them to him, as Servants to fulfil his Will, and desiring thereafter to be intirely devoted to him ; and from this he continually ascended to more noble Degrees of Love, so as to forget himself, and his own Felicity, thro' zeal to devote himself to God purely for the sake of God, with an entire forgetfulness of self : By these Degrees we may conceive the Angels to be establish'd and confirm'd in Happiness.

Chap. IX.

*IV. How  
the good  
Angel con-  
ducted  
himself  
towards  
other An-  
gels*

IV. Suppose we now the Angel to have had the Idea of other Angels ; and first of Good ones like himself: Those, according to the property of Beings, naturally communicate their Realities to one another, the good Angel made Impression on his Fellows and they reciprocally upon him. But all are full of God, of his Light and Love, and sought naturally, and with ardour, the Divine Light and Joy, and to perfect themselves more and more for, in, and by means of them: And therefore the Communion of Impressions among them needs must be most admirable and delicious, scattering upon each other glorious Rays of Light and Love Divine, with a Holy Love of themselves and one another, mutual Joy and Increase in Good and Divine Congratulations of each others Happiness ; and, in a word, a mutual Communication in God of all their Happiness and Perfection, Complementing each other, I am wholly yours in God.

*V. Reci-  
procal  
Communi-  
on of God  
and Bless-  
ed Spi-  
rits : How  
they disco-  
ver to  
each other  
the know-  
ledge of  
their Es-  
tate.*

V. The Blessed Angel being full of God, and of his Light and Love, and careful to preserve himself for him, made on his fellow Angels lively Impressions of this Light and Love, and of himself as a Lover or Friend of God, zealous to preserve himself pure for the Divine Injoyment. This tended to make his fellow Angels Friends of God, and of such as loved him. Those Impressions, strengthened with like ones of their own, the Angels reflected on him, who had thus prevented them ; whereupon we may conceive between the Holy Angels a Divine Rencontre and Contention, who should excell in Divine Caresses and Congratulations of the Lights, the Love, and incomparable Charity of one another ; and who in Charity should be most devoted to the others, and who most zealous to celebrate the Creator's Praises: To this Divine Rencontre of Love, Millions of Angels bring their Lights, their Love, Charity and Joys Divine, all striving to excel in Love and Praise, producing in the Hearts of all unspeakable Delight and Joy : Thus they continue in a mutual Communion of Joys Divine, till God, by powerful, renew'd Attracts and Impressions of his Perfections, invites 'em to a Banquet of the Divinity, to admire the Glories of his Essence,



Essence, the Powers of the Father, the Lights of the Son, the Delights and Joys of the Holy Spirit: To this Heavenly Feast all run with Transports, and plunge themselves, with all their Powers, in the deep Abyss of the Divine Perfections, forgetting themselves with Wonder and Amazement; till God brings them to themselves, and makes 'em to see and reflect upon the new Beauties and Excellencies with which they are adorned, by Contemplating the Glories of his Essence; whereupon they repeat their first reciprocal Communion, Congratulating one another's Felicity and Perfection, and extolling God with infinite Transports of most Holy and Ardent Passion. This is Eternal Life; an endless Circle of Blessedness: It is thus in brief, that the faithful Angel Conducts himself towards God and his fellow Angels.

VI. Let us next suppose that an Angel sees another in an Evil State: Now this Evil may be considered, as complete and resolved upon, or, as imperfect, or not resolved upon; but wavering, and in suspense between two Objects. By this Division of our Supposition into two, we shall discover how the Good Angels behave themselves towards sinful Men, who are as yet in a state of Weakness and Infirmary. If then an Angel see a created Spirit involved in Sin; but with such mixtures of Ignorance and Infirmary, that hope remains of his return to God; he will dart forth, on this unhappy Spirit, Rays and Impressions of the Light and Love of God, and of a just and regular Love of Self, for the sake of God, and of a research and desire of Divine and Salutary Joys, and of Good Will and Love for others: And the infirm Sinner, the suppos'd Object of the Angelick Spirit, will also reflect Impressions on him, as well by good Thoughts, and such other remains of Goodness as are left in him; as by reflections of the Light which the good Angel darted on him: And hence the good Spirit will discover the Sinner's state, in the same manner, as I shewed \* above, that the Idea of Sin was seen by God: He will presently perceive, that the Impressions which the Sinner makes upon him, are not like those which come from his

Chap IX.

VI. How a good Spirit conducts himself towards another in an Evil Estate, by infirmity, and not resolutely: How they communicate with each other.

\* Ch. 5. 2.

Chap IX. own Fund : He will see the Imperfection of his State ; that he is not confirmed, nor resolved in Sin, because he admits some good Impressions made upon him : And thus the Angel will see and know the Wants and Imperfections of the Sinner ; both what he hath, and what he is capable of, and will regulate his Conduct toward him accordingly : That defect of Goodness which he discovers in him, he will entirely detest and hate ; but will rejoice on account of such remains thereof, as he discovers in him, and endeavour to improve and make it perfect. He will earnestly desire to see him fill'd with all the Good he is capable of, and in order to it will assist him to the utmost : The Good and Evil he sees in him, will actuate his Desire and Hope ; a Desire and Hope to see the Destruction of Sin and Evil will dispose him to open the poor Sinner's Eyes to see the deformity of Sin, to imprint a horror of it, and assist him to do violence to himself to overcome it ; the same Desire and Hope will incite him to endeavour the Improvement and Perfection of all Good in him, to shew it to him by the Light Divine, and to stir him up to the Love and Research thereof : His Conduct towards the infirm Sinner will be tempered with Charity, Truth and Justice : He will, as far as in him is, discover to him the true knowledge of Good and Evil, divert him, in Charity from the one, and allure him to the other : But he will act, in this, with Truth and Justice, abhorring Flattery and Dissimulation : Nor sparing, if need be, hard and violent Impressions, to exterminate those Evils which the soft Impressions of Light and Love will not persuade the Sinner to quit : For even these Impressions, tho' sweet and delightful to them who are disposed to follow 'em, are harsh and violent to them who do resist them ; as a Vessel goes smoothly on with the advantage of the Wind, but if it sail against it 'tis unreasonable to expect the Wind should turn as we would have it. No, tho' it was calm before, and still blow in an even, steady manner ; yet, when we steer opposite to it, it is rough and violent 'till the Ship changes its Course, and sails with it.

All this does shew how they, who think themselves to be strong in God, should demean themselves towards their weak and infirm Brethren, who are in Sin and Error. Men who are truly Christians should regulate their Behaviour towards each other, as the Good Angels do : If Men are resolutely Wicked, their Conduct must be different, as was that of the Faithful Angels towards the disobedient Ones, which I go to describe.

Chap IX.

VII. Tho' the Angel of Light had Power to eradicate his Luminous Impressions upon the Angel of Darkness, the latter had no power to act upon the Good. The Reason is, because Light and Good are naturally communicative, and tend to multiply every where, and in every thing, in vertue of the Property received from God. But Darkness and Evil are not naturally and of themselves communicable, except to Subjects that are willing to admit them. To be Communicative is a Property that can only come from God, which Sin and Darkness do not ; but are a Nothing, or Monstrous Subsistence to which God never gave Existence or Idea. Darkness and Evil have therefore no Power over Reality and Good : Nor can all the Devils in Hell do the least hurt to a Spirit confirmed in the Felicity and Light Divine. The Element he dwells in is above their reach ; nor have they knowledge of what passes there ; Fraud and Malice are meer Nothing, Impotence itself in respect of him : But if Men are willing and disposed to receive the Impressions of Darkness and Evil, they then are Communicable ; for tho' they are not naturally so, the Will nevertheless is free to admit 'em, and its Consent impowers the Evil Spirits to make Impressions on a Subject distracted from God, and occupied about an Object, whom his Distraction from God hath fill'd with Darkness, and subjected to the Power of the Devil, so making it an Instrument fit for him to act by.

VIII. There is therefore no other Communion between Good and Evil Spirits but this ; the Good Angels, and all that are in perfect Union with God, do know the Thoughts and Depravations of the Wicked better than they do themselves.



**Chap. IX.** dart forth their Luminous Impressions, which return to their Source, according as they are variously rejected, and by their return inform the Good Angel of the Privation of God, and his Beatifying Lights and Graces, in which the Sinner lives, *i. e.* give him an Idea of the Sinner's State, his Thoughts, his Actions, Qualities and Powers, with all that Mass of Malignity that is in him in all its Degrees, Strength and Circumstances, all which Particulars are more certainly known to the Good by the return of these Luminous Impressions, than they are to the Wicked; because the Motions of the Wicked are in themselves Dark, Irregular and Confuse, but the Impressions of Light always return in an exact degree of Justice and Proportion. And for this Reason God, and Spirits in union with him, do understand the State, and the most secret Thoughts of disobedient Spirits, whenever they please to eradiate their Light upon them, better than they themselves. It is vain to think to hide ones self from the Light Divine, it doth and will manifest every thing; nothing is hid that shall not be revealed by it; it shines on what it pleases, and sees into the most interior Nature of whatever it shines upon by its Admission, or Rejection of it.

**IX.** *How in Consequence of this knowledge the Good oppose the Wicked in virtue of the Divine Light.*

**IX.** Now tho' the Good Angel receive the Reflection of his Luminous Rays, and hereby thoroughly sees the State of Wicked Spirits; he is not distracted from God, but continually receives his refreshing Luminous Impressions, and hath therefore a Divine sense and feeling of the contrariety of the Impressions made by God, and by the Light reflected from the Evil One; and because the Divine Impressions are natural and agreeable, he formally opposes all the Dark, Malicious and Perverse ones which naturally come from the Wicked Spirit, and endeavours to imprint on every thing a signature of the Divine Impressions; and the Opposition he feels within makes him irreconcilably to hate the Works of the Evil One, and the Obstinacy and Perverseness with which he opposes God.

**X.** And

X. And thus we see how a Created Spirit, who Chap. IX.  
 hath for his Objects God himself, or Spirits like or  
 unlike himself in Nature and Disposition, receives their  
 Impressions either separately or together in a manner  
 agreeable to the Order and Establishment of God :  
 If he act in this manner, he conforms to the Consti-  
 tution of the Impressions which Objects make upon  
 him, to attract and assimilate him to themselves :  
 Thus Liberty does Justice to them all, without be-  
 ing Injurious unto any. That Object which makes  
 the most Divine, Luminous and Delightful Impressi-  
 ons, and which is the Original Spring and Cause of  
 all the Attracts and Impressions of other Creatures ;  
 to it Liberty makes an offer of its most Divine, Ca-  
 pacious, and Noble Faculties, devoting to it in an  
 unlimited manner its Supreme Intelligence, Love and  
 Joy, fixing upon it as its only End, and referring  
 to it the Glory of whatever Impressions other Objects  
 do make upon it, as being the Original Source of all  
 their Realities and Perfection.

X A Re-  
 capitula-  
 tion. A  
 Spirit that  
 hath God,  
 himself,  
 and other  
 Creatures  
 for his  
 Objects,  
 cannot sin  
 if he re-  
 ceive  
 their Im-  
 pressions  
 according  
 to the Or-  
 der of  
 their Na-  
 tures.

To inferior Objects, whose Impressions are less Lu-  
 minous, Delightful and Attracting; it divides by just  
 Measure and Proportion, not its Infinite and Eter-  
 nal Powers; no, these are reserved for that Infinite  
 Eternal Object, to which they incessantly aspire ; but  
 those whose Operations may cease and be extinguish-  
 ed, which it is often forc'd, to limit, restrain, and  
 impose a silence on : Such are our Faculties of Rea-  
 son and Meditation on the Creaturely Ideas, and the  
 like. Nor does this moderate Application to inferi-  
 or Objects distract the Mind from God, because the  
 Mind that corresponds with Justice, traces the Crea-  
 turely Impressions up to God, their Original Cause ;  
 and having found him, it takes leave of them to engage  
 its Faculties in admiring the Perfections of their Cause,  
 and to receive the Emanations of his glorious Essence ;  
 till this Source of all Excellence and Perfection leads  
 it abroad again, to walk and review with Admiration  
 the Beauty of his Works, to delight it self in them,  
 and be refresh'd with the exquisite Odours which the  
 Outworks and Furniture of the Magnificent Friend,  
 who leads it forth to view his Glory, are all of them  
 perfumed with.

Chap. IX. It follows then, that before the Event of Sin, Liberty needed only to follow the Impressions of the Creatures, considered together, and not apart; and that while it did receive their Attracts and Impressions, according to the Original Order and Establishment of God, it was happy, and incapable of sinning, however it varied its choice among them, admitting them by turns in the Order and Establishment of God.

XI. *The Method or Gradation of the Perfection of the Faithful Angel, unto his Establishment and Election.*

\* Ch. 2.

14.

XI. When the Created Spirit hath conducted his Liberty in this manner, and freely applied his Faculties to the Impressions of the Objects, of which he had Ideas: Let us next consider what further Degrees, must be passed through, before he be so establish'd in Felicity, as to be incapable of falling.

To conceive this Matter, we need only to apply what hath been said \* above, concerning the Labile Creature, and the Progress of his Perfection, how it is carried on, from the first consent of Liberty 'till it is confirmed: God's gracious Lights, and a liberal Communication of his Blessings, do not fail to assist and co-operate with the Creature's Acts, whereby the Angel is more strengthened and confirmed in good, than was possible to be by the sole Efforts of his natural Powers. He plunges himself (as I may say) in the Element Divine, whereby he becomes divinely tempered, and powerfully dispos'd to Good; with which Disposition and Temper, God does further co-operate by his free Benediction, rendring his Activity and Powers infinitely more lively, strong and vigorous; and because these things do naturally tend to dure and reproduce themselves, they become habitual and strong: The Angelick Acts are reproduc'd with a marvellous Facility, and God amorously corresponds by his Grace and Benediction; and after the Angelick Will hath approved itself constant, in adhering to God, during a sufficient time of Probation; it is at length establish'd in a full and irrevocable abandon to him; who never fails to communicate himself in as free, absolute, and unlimited a Manner. And this Blessed State is what we understand by the Confirmation and Election of Angels,

and



and so the Scripture is to be understood when it speaks Chap. X.  
of \* *Elect-Angels*. And here we see the Chain of  
their Eternal Salvation.

\* 1 Tim.  
5. 21.

CH A P. VI.

Of the Fall of the Rebel-Angels.

I.



CONSIDER we now what hap- I. *Advan-*  
pened to the Rebel-Angel. He *ages in-*  
injoy'd Originally the same Ad- *joyed by*  
vantages, as He who continued *the Rebel-*  
Faithful: The same Divine Facul- *Angel be-*  
ties, Objects, Felicity, Liberty, *fore his*  
End, and attracting Graces were *Fall.*

given and proposed to both. Predestined he was by  
his Creation to Eternal Life, and to enjoy it, in an  
unlimited, Noble, and Perfect Manner, viz. with  
Choice and Freedom: Nor can we doubt; but, at first,  
he corresponded with the Divine Impressions, re-  
ceived an infinity of Grace and Benediction from the  
hand of God; was fill'd with Light, with joy and  
Glory flowing from him the Source of Blessedness, in  
whom at first he sought it: Tho' afterwards he left  
his Post, as the Scripture witnesses, where, speaking  
of the Evil Angels, it says, \* *The Angels who kept* \* Jude v.  
*not their first Estate, and left their own Habitation.* 6.

II. The Angel, in proportion as he received the II. *The*  
Divine Impressions, and corresponded with them, *Angels*  
increased in Perfection, Intelligence, Light, and joys *Fall be-*  
Divine: The Sense and perception of, which was not *gan in an*  
Evil, so long as his Faculties aspired to higher De- *excessive*  
grees in virtue, and perfection, and to the Divine *Applicati-*  
Light, and Blessedness, in a manner worthy of them, *on to the*  
and he sought to satisfy their aspirings, by Objects *Senti-*  
agreeable to the soliciting impressions of his Facul- *ments and*  
ties, according to the Divine Order and Constitution, *view of*  
divine Perfections, referring them to themselves, and not to God: *their Di-*  
straction from God produced darkness in them.

Chap. X  as the Faithful Angel did: But instead of regulating his Application as the Reason of Things required, and keeping it in bounds of Moderation, he suffered it to be excessive and unreasonable: First, his Liberty ingaged his Application too far, in the Sentiment and view of his own Perfections, to a neglect of God; rendring the Attracts and Light Divine less Sensible and Relishing: Hence Darknels by degrees overspread his mind; I say by Degrees: For God did not immediately withdraw his Luminous Attracts, but continued and increas'd them, knocking more loudly at his Heart, to reduce him to God, and if possible to recal him at his first straying, and so prevent his Ruin and Destruction. But the increase of God's Grace and luminous impressions served, by his abuse, only to increase his Distraction: The view of his luminous perfections, and the Joys and Delights resulting from them, fill'd him with Sensuality and Self-love to which he abused all God's Graces, designed to recal him, seeking only his own Satisfaction in them.

III. The  
Continua-  
tion and  
Consum-  
mation of  
the Angels  
Fall not-  
with-  
standing  
God's Gra-  
cious In-  
deavours  
to prevent  
it.

III. Now here it is, the Misery of Man begins, viz. In seeking himself in all the Attracts and Inclinations of his Faculties, turning all these inward upon himself, with Admiracion and Sensual Delight: Proposing to find in himself, and in his own Idea, which intirely fills his Mind, that Happiness and Injoyment to which his Faculties aspire. For by turning his Faculties upon himself, he turned them away from God, and so caused Insensibility and Darknels to come upon him; which daily increasing he became at length intirely insensible to the Divine Attracts, to the Light and Happiness that come immediately from God; the which he sought only in himself; so making himself his Principle and End: And here should God have dealt with justice to him, he might justly have withdrawn and extinguish'd all the Divine Lights and Gracious Influences; but as he is Merciful and Gracious, so I firmly believe, that he did not presently withdraw, but continued the offer of them; increasing his Gracious Drawings and Impressions, so as to dart forth his most bright and lively Rays, to penetrate and recal the Distracted Spirit, and to display all

all possible means to prevent his Fall: Till at last this Chap. X.  
wretched Spirit, vain in his own eyes, referring to himself, as Principle and End, all the Divine Impressions; and wholly taken up in seeing, feeling, and seeking himself: Disposing the Divine Influences as if he were Master of them, and imagining perhaps, when he felt the Divine Allurings, that God was Dependent on him: (As the thoughts of a Proud vain glorious Spirit needs must be very Extravagant:) God, who cannot assist, nor co-operate with Evil, withdrew his Divine Lights and Graces, seeing they were abused without hopes of any Amendment by them. And thus we see the Angel of Light plunged in Eternal Misery and Darkness, reject of God, and transformed into a Devil.

IV. So here we see him reprobate by his own Free-IV. *The*  
will: It is not the Effect of any predestinating De- *Misery of*  
cree, or Will, or Act, or even Consent of God: He *the Devil*  
wholly disapproves it, and it is contrary to his Will: *is not*  
God hath no otherwise contributed to it, than by lea- *from a*  
ving Liberty to act agreeably to its Nature, and letting *Predesti-*  
it so happen to the Angel, even as he will'd. It was *nating*  
his own Free-will to turn his Faculties constantly to *Decree;*  
himself, to see, and feel, and seek in Himself his All; *but is the*  
the Source of his Happiness and Light: God there- *Pure Ef-*  
fore abandoned him to himself, and retired from him: *fect of Li-*  
Whereupon the Angel possess and felt himself, such *berty,*  
as he really was, the Source of no good at all. For *which*  
when the true Source of Light and joy was dryed *turned his*  
away, and all his Faculties of Research, Activiy, *Faculties*  
Sensibility and Endeavour continued to make impres- *away from*  
sions on himself, and found an intellect void of Light; *the Source*  
and Amorous Faculties, without an infinite Good; *of Good,*  
then did this Spirit feel himself in a Confuse, Misera- *the Ori-*  
ble, Restless, Void, Condition, having only himself, *gine of*  
and his own dark painful motions to feed upon, and *the Blas-*  
satisfie his infinite Desires, and seeing moreover an *phemies*  
utter impossibility to derive from its natural Fund, *of Dam-*  
that Light and pleasure to which he did aspire, he *ned Spi-*  
turned himself to hate and blaspheme the Author of *rits.*  
his Being, for not creating him of such a Nature, as



Chap. X. to derive, like him, his Light and happiness from his proper fund.

V. The capital Sin and Obduration of the Devil: The Light and Grace of God are his terriblest Torment: Why he is incurable.

V. And when all those Acts were obstinately repeated, during the time limited for Forbearance, they became confirmed in a full and resolved habit, of making himself the Principle and End of all his Conduct. This is the Great, inveterate Sin, the first Foundation, the strongest Chain that binds the Devil fast in Hell. It is that Sin which makes the Remembrance and Thought of God a Terror to him: Nor does any thing give him such Horrour and Confusion, as to irradiate on him the impressions of the Light and Love Divine. For a Deliberate habitual Self-adhesion renders the Devil incapable of admitting the Divine Impressions: The more he is invested by them, his Darkeness, Confusions, Horrors, and Emotions are more confined and concentrated within; and are therefore more sensible and painful; and consequently then do's the Evil Spirit most sensibly taste and feel the vacuity, Confusion, disquietude, and vanity of all his Efforts: And hence it is that there is nothing which the Devil dreads and flees from with more Abhorrence, than the presence, the Light, and Love Divine, and their remembrance: Because, in them, he finds his greatest and most uneasy torment. The Greatest favour God can do him, is to abandon him to himself: Tho' the more abandoned, the more void, dark and miserable he is: And that which makes his Condition desperate and incurable, is, because, that which he desires and chuses for his Relief and Ease, is the Source of his Misery.

VI. That these Disorders are not incredible: That Resemblances of them may be found even among Men.

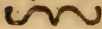
VI. It is not a thing incredible that there should be so terrible a Disorder, since, even in this life, some Men have come so near it, as never to be in more torture or Disorder, or to have greater aversion and disgust, than in serious Discourses concerning God's Holiness, Truth and love: Or in impressions made on them contrary to that way of Research, which they, in imitation of the Devil, make by themselves, and their own Light: Or to those Sentiments of Delight and Acquiescence which they find therein: Or, in fine, to their habitual State, Disposition, Glory

Pride,

Pride, and Vanity of their Natures. This is the Chap. X.  
 Source of what is called *Odium Theologicum*, consist-  
 ing in a Love of ones own Disease, (lyes and darknes)  
 and a desire to eradicate and destroy whatever is op-  
 posite thereto; which is a Diabolical Spirit, and it  
 was to Men of this Mind that those words of Jesus  
 Christ were spoke. \* *You are of your Father the* John 8. v.  
*Devil. He was a Lyar and a Murderer from the Be-* 40-44.  
*ginning: You cannot hear nor receive my Word:*  
*You seek to kill me, because I tell you the Truth.* In-  
 deed such Men are almost as Incurable as the Devil:  
 In like manner we see Nothing is more Intolerable  
 than Instruction to them who are wise in their own  
 Opinions. They who are ticklish and quick of feel-  
 ing, tho they have grievous wounds about 'em, can't  
 bear to be touch'd in order to a Cure: And there-  
 fore God will leave them to themselves, after ha-  
 ving sufficiently display'd his Grace and Mercy,  
 and seen that they only serve to increase Abuse,  
 and to confirm them in their Evil State: At the  
 Final Judgment, he will, once for all, eradicate  
 his Glories on them, to convince them of the Equi-  
 ty of forsaking and leaving them to themselves, af-  
 ter which, so far will he be from inflicting on them,  
 as some imagine, Eternal Pains and Misery, that  
 he will no more concern himself about them. No,  
 they will carry a sufficient Hell of Miseries about  
 them.

VII. Now let's consider the Rebel Angel as ha-  
 ving an Idea of other Angels, of the same nature  
 with himself; but some Inferiour, others equal in  
 Order to him. By Angels of an Inferiour Order I  
 understand them, who, tho' they receive their Lights  
 and joys immediately from God, do nevertheless re-  
 ceive the first Impressions of Infinite Diversifications  
 of them, by the means of other Angels, who may be  
 call'd Arch-Angels: As when, e. g. God hath enter-  
 tained his Angels with the Contemplation and Fruiti-  
 on of some particular Excellence of his Nature, and  
 is minded to feast them with the Injoyment of an-  
 other. The first Signal or Impression of it is suppos'd  
 to be given to the Arch-Angel, who strait signifies to  
 the

VII. How  
 the Devil  
 might pro-  
 bably se-  
 duce his  
 Subject  
 Angels.  
 An Idea  
 of the An-  
 gelical Su-  
 periority.

Chap. X.  the rest the Creators Will, of turning their Application to a New Glory of his Essence; the Pomp and Magnificence whereof he is minded to discover to them: and as the Arch-Angel first turns his Contemplation to it, and freely resigns himself; so all the rest immediately follow, injoying God, without further regard of the Arch-Angel who led them forth; till he gives another Signal to lead to the Contemplation of another Excellence of God.

VIII. *How the Angels were seduced by their head: That Men upon Earth do copy after them in the Conduct of their Souls.* VIII. I wish these things were well considered by us, as being the Originals which Men do copy after. The Guides of Souls both Good and Bad; their Good and Evil Conduct; their Fidelity, Seduction, and Behaviour, the Duty which their Hearers and Inferiours owe them; and how the Direction of their Guides is Instrumental, either, to save, or damn them, are all depainted in the Angels Conduct, to be as a Prototype to the Worlds End. Now before the Arch-Angel apostatiz'd and managed his superiority according to the Order and Will of God, besides the Common Impressions made on his Subject-Angels, and which the Good do mutually make upon each other, he imprinted on them the Characters of a brighter Excellence and Light, peculiar to himself: Thus the Inferiour Angels, whilst they adhered to God, received with joy, as in, and for God, the Excellent Impressions of the Light-Divine, and of their Arch-Angel, who was yet a friend of God; and by him, the Signal to vary the Divine Contemplation and Injoyment: And because their whole Felicity consisted in it, it increased their Love to the Arch-Angel, who was Instrumental to lead them from Perfection to Perfection, or to change them as the Scripture Speaks from Glory to Glory: His Divine Employment endeared him to them, and they were loving, Respectful, and Obedient, as well on account of it, as of his Divine Prerogatives and Perfections.

IX. *The Fall of the Inferiour Angels occasioned by a too great Adhesion to their Arch Angel, an overvaluing his Conduct, and too blind Obedience to him.* IX. The Application, Obedience and Respect of the Inferiour Angels to their Prince, became by degrees Excessive, especially when the latter placed





on himself that Love and Admiration which is due to God: In Consequence of which Disorder, the Impressions of Light and Grace, by him convey'd to them, were mingled with Impressions tending to draw their Love and Esteem towards himself, and to make them relish and regard these Divine Impressions, as if they came from the fund of Perfection Essential to him. Which mixt Impressions the Inferiour Angels too readily admitted, and consented to, violating the Great Duty indispensably required of them, *viz.* to Adhere to God as Principle and End of all Excellence and Perfection, and from, and in, and by all things to return to him, and delight themselves in, and with him: Carefully observing their Prince Angel's Conduct, with a Mind disposed and ready to Anathematize and to forsake him, if he presumed to stop them short of, or to direct them to any besides God: As well knowing that their Subordination and Obedience was founded solely on their Relation unto God, (*viz.*) that, by means of it, they might obey, and fix upon him, with greater Unanimity, Love and Order. But when once their Prince Angel put himself in the Creators stead, and, instead of conducting them to God, drew them to admire himself, it did not only evacuate all Obedience and Respect; but, even, obliged them to hate him, and abandoning his Guidance, to resign themselves to God alone, who would, no doubt, have amply provided for them, what was fit and proper. But, instead of acting thus, a Respect, and Adhesion to their Prince Angel, a tenderness for, and too great an Application to his Impressions, and a blind Devotion to his Orders, were too strongly confirmed, and deeply rooted in them. The Natural Laws by which things through long Duration and repeated acts are strengthened and confirmed in Habits: And also the New Impressions of Attracting Lights and Graces which the Arch-Angel, who as yet received them from God, made upon them: These, I say, tho' mingled with selfish regards, tended to increase their Respect and Devotion to him: They perceived that the Lights and Pleasures were Divine; and their Adhesion to their Prince, and his Impressions on them,

Chap. X. disposed them to regard him as the Original Source, and *absolute Dispensator* of them: This Disposition of referring to the Arch-Angel the Irradiations received by his means, rendred them more and more Insensible to the Impressions which came directly from God: The Arch-Angel continually renewed the Divine Impressions on them, more and more; whence they became more devoted to him in Application, Respect, and blind Obedience; submitting to his Conduct without examining it by the Light Divine; whereby they gradually became so dark and Insensible to the Impressions made immediately by God, as to admit none unless convey'd to them by the Prince Angel: And thus the Sin of the Devils Angels was formed, and they became Companions of his Fall. For when God retired from him, and deprived him of his Light and Gracious Influence; Darkness, Confusion, Torment, and Horrour succeeded in their room, in which the Angels were involved together with their Prince, as a just Punishment of their obstinate and resolute seeking in him their Lights and joys Divine: So that, by his Fall, they also were deprived of them, and became partakers of his Miseries; no more to receive that Gracious Light which they wilfully rejected, by turning themselves away from its Original Source: Tho' it is to be observed, that God did not withdraw his Influences from them, till by a sufficient tryal he found that his Greatest Graces, by their perverseness and abuse, disposed them only to despise and forsake him, wickedly preferring their Arch-Angel before him.

X. That the fall of the Devils Angels, was the Effect not of the Will of God, but of their own Will. X. Thus were the Angels involved in ruin, together with their Prince, by adhering too much to him, and seeking in him that happiness and bliss, which they ought to have sought in God alone, or to have referred to him. All which, it is very plain, was not the Effect of the Will of God, but solely of their own wilful and obstinate adhesion to the Impressions of their Prince; whence the Divine Attracts, tho' in themselves infinitely more forcible, became Insensible and Inefficacious to them, till God at last, finding them blindly and obstinately to adhere to their Prince. Their Reprobation.

ing that all his indeavours were in vain, and that his Lights and Graces served only to increase their Sins, was forced to retire from them: Herein consists their Reprobation, which comes positively from themselves alone? God only leaves 'em to their Liberty, and gives them up obstinately and blindly to adhere to their Prince Angel: Whether any among 'em escape the fall it is impossible to know except God reveal it. Chap. X.

XI. The Impressions which the Rebel-Angels made on others not Subject to them had not so bad Effects. Before the entire privation of the Divine Impressions, they acted indeed upon other Angels, with Impressions mingled with selfish Relations: Which mixture, or absence of a Reference to God, the Faithful Angels soon perceived, and strait withdrew their Application, Consent, and Love from the Defective Impressions made upon them, with a Hatred as great as was their Adhesion and Love to God: Endeavouring to recal the Apostatizing Angels by contrary Impressions. But their Charitable Endeavour was to as little Effect, as were the Gracious Impressions of God himself. Whatever had not a Reference to Self, they were insensible unto; seeking in their Correspondence to Imprint on their Fellow Angels a selfish regard, and to boast themselves as the Source, and absolute Proprietors of Light and Bliss; and, by their false witness unto God, to efface the Consideration of Him as Principle, and End of All things; thus (as much as in them was) murdering the Image of the Living God; on which account the Devil is call'd \* *A Murderer from the Beginning*. But the Holy Angels continued Faithful unto God, opposing the Impressions of the Devil; till the Light Divine being totally withdrawn, he had power only to make Impressions upon himself, and those wretched Spirits, to whom, because they depended wholly on his Dispensation, he is now become a Source of Darkness, Confusions, Horrors, Torments, and infinite Evils Essential to him. XI. How the Devil and his Angels could not seduce the other Faithful Angels.

XII. It is true indeed these things are not particularized in Scripture: It do's not directly mention the Scripture doth not Particularize these things, they are however founded on certain Principles. XII. Tho



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either the Creation, or the Oeconomy, or the fall of some, and the Establishment of other Angels; much less the Means, the Degrees, Time and other Circumstances, by which they were effected. But as the Silence of Scripture concerning the Creation, Different Order and Degrees, the fall of some and establishing of others, is no argument against the Truth of these things: So neither is it against the Means, Time, and other Circumstances of them. Only we must beware of fixing them too precisely: Nor shall I, I hope be accused of doing so, seeing I leave these Circumstances undetermined: The Truths considered in themselves are Rational and Instructive, have Intrinsic Characters of Solid Truth, and will have the Evidence of Demonstration to such as can comprehend the Principles on which they stand, which are as follows.

1. That with Subjects of the same Nature, (as the Angelick and Human Spirits are,) God acts alike, because he is Constant, Wise, and Just.

2. That God always acts with Truth, (offering his Lights) with Goodness, (seeking the Happiness of his Creatures, and removing Evils from them,) and with Justice, (forsaking none but who forsake him, and resolutely forsaking only such as fully and resolutely do forsake him.)

3. That the Nature of a Spirit is not to pass in a moment from one state to another entirely opposite, as from Light and Happiness, to Darkness and Misery: From pure Goodness to pure Evil: From Friendship, to Enmity with God. *Nemo repente fit Turpissimus*, says one very truly: And besides the Scripture in the passage above cited from St. James, \* plainly intimates the Different Degrees of Sin: And both reason and Experience clearly prove it to whoever examines what hath been said † above of the Nature, Source, and Establishment of Habits.

\* Ch 8.  
6.

† Ch. 11.  
5.

XIII That  
the Cer-  
tainty of  
these

XIII. If then we do allow these Truths, and that, as hath been already proved, every thing tends to persevere in Being, and communicate itself: All that Principles and Conclusions cannot without extreme absurdity be denied: God never Will'd the Death of Sinful Angels; but that they should return and live.

hath

hath been advanced concerning the Conduct of Good Chap. X.  
 and Evil Angels, may be deduced from them in a Geometrical Evidence and Certainty: To the three principles abovementioned we may add a fourth, *viz.* That God always acts by Order, without Precipitation or Violence: Allowing time to every thing to confirm itself in the state to which it tends. Some by a Machinal and pure Brutal Nature: others by Choice and Freedom: But All requiring by their Natural Constitution a certain continued course or Method to establish themselves, according to the Principles of Habits, it is extremely absurd and impious, against God and Nature, to imagine Angels to have been Created, some habitually good, others wicked, or destined to become so: Or some confirmed in Goodness from the first act of virtue, others irreversibly rejected, from their first detour from God, or Evil act committed by them, without allowing them either time, or recal, or any Grace; or, in a Word, without being as favourable and gracious to them, as Men use to be to such as are not resolutely and maliciously hardened in iniquity: Would the Devils speak the Truth, I question not; but they would own God to have been in respect of them, as *Moses* says he was towards Men, \* *The Lord, the Lord God Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Mercy and Truth: And as David* † *the Lord is Good towards all, and his Mercies are over all his Works:* God's Conduct towards his Creatures necessarily bears the Character of his Perfections, *i. e.* of Pure Love and Goodness: It is certain he hath not will'd that Angels or Men should die Eternally, but that both should return and Live: And therefore the Angels were not Predestined to Eternal Death.

\* Exod. 34. 6, 7.  
 † Ps. 147.

## C H A P. XI.

## Of the first Beginning, Degrees and Steps of the Sin of Man.

I.



It is time now to treat of the Sin of Man: Concerning which I will consider, First, The Manner in which it was Committed. Secondly, Its Effects, in respect of Man, and of the Subject Creatures; and also of Man's Descendants,

which is what we call Original Sin: Whence it will appear, that all the Defects in Nature come wholly and solely from the Liberty of Man; and in no respect from the Divine Decree or Destination; nor from his Co-operation or Consent to it; except only a Consent that Man should be always free, and that as Liberty doth chase; so it should be with him.

II Two Suppositions is relating to the Sin of Man, 1. That it was committed gradually. 2. That it is of another Species than the Angels.

II. In order to represent the Circumstances of the Sin of Man, I premise two Suppositions; one of which hath been sufficiently proved already as to the general Thesis, viz. That Sin in general, and by consequence the Sin of Man was formed gradually: The other Supposition is, that the Sins of Man and Angels are of a different Species: They agree indeed in their common Genus, viz. Distraction, or Disapplication from God; but differ in the Object of their Distraction: Divine and Spiritual Lights and Graces were the Object of the Angels Sin: These he considered as proceeding from his Natural Fund; and his Sin consisted in directly turning his Faculties away from God, towards himself; whereas Man's did not abuse directly the Divine and Spiritual Lights and Graces; nor directly defile his Faculties Divine, nor did he turn them upon himself; but his Disapplication did immediately concern other both Faculties and Objects.



III. It follows hence, that if Man do fall, and his Faculties Divine lose their Spiritual Lights and Goods ; if he adheres to self, it will not be in so high, so deep, and direct a manner as the Rebel Angels ; whose every Distraction was the most exquisite in its Nature ; whereas if the Sin of Man does not immediately concern God, nor the Faculties Divine ; and the Privation of God does only indirectly follow, but in consequence of something else, it is plain his Sin will be of not so desperate a Nature as the Angels, and he might have fallen, or still may, into the Effects and Consequences of a more terrible Sin, as is, *e. g.* Hatred of God, absolute Despair and Rage, Cursing and Blasphemy against God : Now, tho' Man be already in a Lapse, this terrible Sin, with its Effects, may be prevented and avoided ; which one may piously presume, was consider'd among the Motives which induced God, in infinite Mercy, to have Compassion on him : For God, whose Nature is, as far as possible, to hinder Sin, if he see a Creature, departed from him, but not as yet in the most remote Degree, *i. e.* one who does not directly oppose him with Knowledge and Resolution to continue obstinate in his Rebellion, cannot but try all Means to prevent his final Ruin, by supplying all Lights, Motions and Means proper to recall and to restore him : Powerful Remedies seasonably applied perhaps may effect a Cure. The Divine Faculties are not, it may be, directly depraved : And if God, to awaken them, display his powerful Graces ; if he open the Sinners Eyes to see that all his Faculties are in Darkness and Misery ; he may, perhaps, by a Correspondence forward the awakening them : He may restore his inferior Faculties from their Fall, and to preserve the Divine ones from voluntary Abuse and Depravation ; when he sees the Miseries all are ready to be plung'd in ; and tho' the sinful Creature hath no pretence of Merit to so great Mercy, nevertheless if God vouchsafe to resume the design of his Redemption, the alleviating Circumstances that attend his Sin, may be reckon'd among the Motives to it : And here we may discover the fundamental Reasons which might

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III. The sin of Man being of another Species than the Angels, it is less extreme, remediable and not unworthy the Divine Compassion.

Chap. XI. possibly prevail with infinite Mercy to undertake the Work of Man's Redemption, which will be the Subject of the ensuing Book. Proceed we now to represent the Manner of the Fall of Man.

*IV. Man might innocently have followed the bent of his inferior Faculties; in a moderate Exercise about their Objects. Excess here-in was the Occasion of his Fall.*

IV. Man, besides his Faculties Divine, which I have often mentioned, was indued with others of an inferior Nature, as Reason, Imagination, Sense and Passions, to every of which are assigned proper Objects. Reason is conversant about such Ideas as correspond with the Arbitrary Divine Conception, and to things establish'd by it: Imagination, about Matter and the immediate Impressions of it. So likewise every Faculty hath suitable Objects to entertain it. The Universe is the Compleat Collective Object of all these inferior Faculties. Now every of these did tend to dure, to preserve, and to perfect itself in Being, scattering Impressions abroad on every thing, on Man his Intelligence and Superior Powers, and also tending strongly towards their Objects, as is natural for every thing to do: Moreover, according to these Principles, the Objects of every Power: The pure Ideas, the Brain and Animal Spirits, the Disposition of the Body and Blood, the Heavens, the Earth, the Stars, Plants, Animals, and all visible Objects did, according to their Reality, draw and solicit these Faculties to the Injoyment of their Objects by Luminous and Delectable Impressions: And to these Man might lawfully apply them, if he did not suffer his Superior Faculties to be distract from God, by too long an Exercise of the inferior ones: Man's Duty was to moderate these Injoyments, for fear of being drawn off from God, and falling into Destruction.

*V. Every Faculty of Man might lawfully enjoy its proper Object, with a just regard of its Dignity and Nature: The Exercise of Charity and Faith alone is indispensable and infinite.*

V. We must not imagine God to have Created so many admirable Faculties and Objects not to be exercis'd or injoy'd: No, there is no Faculty belonging to our Nature but we might use; nor any Object in Heaven, or in Earth, but we might injoy without committing Sin, provided our Exercise and Injoyment was agreeable to their Constitution, Nature, Order, End and Perfection: Supposing a Fair regard of its Dignity and Nature: The Exercise of Charity and Faith alone is indispensable and infinite.

culty or Object, to be in their Natures Infinite and Chap. XI.  
Divine, and the Foundation of our Beatitude, they ought, one to be Exercis'd, the other enjoy'd in a Divine, most Lively, Full, Infinite, and Constant Manner : And therefore Man was indispensably obliged never to interrupt (at least in a general Way) the Exercise of his Faculties of Desire, Research, Sentiments, Ardour, Intelligence and Love of God, the Supreme Fountain of his Felicity. Here there can be no danger of Excess, because our supreme Felicity consists herein. But in the Exercise of Reason, and the inferior Faculties, and in the Injoyment of their Objects Man must be moderate, as about things that are not the End or Perfection of his Being.

VI. As God, in the Contemplation of his Arbitrary VI. How Ideas, remained still fix'd in the Contemplation of Man himself; so Man, in the Contemplation of them ought might Exercise his Reason, Imagination, and Corporeal Faculties lawfully, and according to the Will of God. to have entertain'd his Mind with God : Nor ought he fixedly to Contemplate these Ideas, but only with a transient, occasional Application and Delight : In them to admire the Wisdom and Power of God, and do Homage to the Divine Perfections. In like manner, his Imagination ought to have received the Impressions of his own Body, and of the Universe ; the Stars, the Elements, and all Nature, out-streaming continually in Rays upon it : He ought, I say, by these to have inform'd himself of the Estate and Nature of the Things subjected to his Government, in Imitation of the Power of God ; but not esteem this Knowledge essential to his Supreme Felicity. No, this must be derived from another Spring ; and therefore there was no need to exercise this Faculty always, or with too eager a Desire : The same is to be said of the other inferior ones : It is true indeed, that as Man had himself a Body, and all Nature was subjected to his Rule : The Care of his own, and Government of other Bodies required that these Faculties should be exercis'd about Corporeal Objects ; but this it required only in a short and transient Manner, to discharge the Government intrusted to him. It was a kind of Arbitrary Delectation, which if Man was minded



Chap. XI. minded to enjoy, (tho' this was purely indifferent to him) it was then necessary to apply himself to external Objects. This Man might lawfully do on such Conditions as the Natures of Things required, *i. e.* without Distraction from God, with a transient, short, and moderate Application, not with his Divine Faculties, or the Desires arising from the interior, or bottom of his Soul, which God is the sole Object of.

**VII. The Impressions which inferior Objects make upon the Faculties Divine are so Refined and Divinized, that Nothing in them leads to disorder.**

VII. Nor could the Impressions of external Objects forcibly constrain the Faculties Divine to yield themselves, without the Consent of Liberty, which it was free to give, or to refuse: The Impressions of inferior Faculties and Objects did not reach the Faculties Divine, till they were first refined by Reason, which presented the Ideas of external Objects to them, as Productions of God's Wisdom and Images of his Excellence and Beauty: So that by these the Faculties Divine were put in mind to turn to, and fix on God, whom their Capacity, Desires and Inclinations pointed to them: They had therefore no necessary Union or Connection with inferior Objects, nor did these immediately act upon them, only they were reminded by them to resign themselves to God, their true and proper Object, as we see, even in the present State of Things, God uses all sort of sensible Things and Objects, and even Reason itself, to awaken our Faculties Divine, our Faith, our Love, and our Desires, to incline them to himself. So then, which way soever we look there's nothing in Nature that necessarily leads or engages Man to Sin.

**VIII. A too immoderate Exercise of the inferior Faculties, which Liberty consented to, hath dulled the Life and Perception of our Spiritual Powers, and subjected them to mean and unworthy Inclinations and Desires.**

VIII. But Liberty, whose Consent and Conduct are free and undetermin'd, instead of Conducting the inferior Faculties by Order and Proportion, and of regarding God in complying with their Inclinations; and of admitting the various Impressions made upon it, in the Order and Disposition of their Nature, *i. e.* with dependance on God, and with Relation to him; and by short and transient Intervals of Application; and with care to preserve its Superior

Powers

Powers elevated to God, hath too much indulged the Use and Exercise of the inferior Faculties, whence Man became distracted from God, and less sensible to his interior Lights and Drawings, and consented, if not totally to suspend, however to interrupt the Exercise of his Superior Powers; so that Liberty itself began to be depraved, leaning toward mean and unworthy Things and Objects. Chap. XI.

IX. Here then we see the first advance toward the Sin of Man, which it is easie, more particularly to describe and shew, by tracing its Entrance and Admission thro' the inferior Faculties, how it gradually increas'd, and was at last compleated, and what are the Effects thereof in Nature, and in the Posterity of Man; but before I enter into this Detail, I will endeavour once more to consider the Original design of Things, which will discover to us many useful Truths. IX. This was the Source of Sin and its Effects if we trace them up to their first Principle or Cause.

X. When God resolved on forming Creatures for his Arbitrary Delight, it was necessary to endue them with Faculties of a more exalted Nature than Brute Creatures have, with whom there can be no amorous Delectation or Correspondence: For these Enjoyments Spirits are only qualified, as being endued with Faculties and Liberty Divine, to conduct themselves, in a Noble, Divine and Amorous Manner, as hath been elsewhere deduced; and, if God was pleased, besides the Divine, to endue them with Subordinate Faculties, it was to qualifie them for his Divine Communion and Enjoyment by means of exterior Operations. X. When God was pleased to form the Design of delighting himself with his Creatures, he endued them with Divine

*and inferior Faculties to qualifie them for it.*

XI. Thus supposing God to have created Angels, with this Design, and endued them with a Nature and Faculties Divine, eternally to enjoy him in an Amorous Felicifying manner. If, when they are Created with this Design, some of them do forsake God, and reject his Divine Communion, Lights and Graces: XI. When the Angels were first created for this End, and had  
*some of them departed from God: It pleased him to create Man in their room, to Communicate with his Creatures in the full Extent of his invariable Design.*

God,

Chap. XI. God, who is unchangeably the same, will not revoke nor abridge his Original Design of Communicating to his Creatures his Beatifying Lights; but, leaving these Rebels to themselves, he will raise up others in their room to carry on the first Design of his gracious Communications, in its entire Amplitude and Extent: So that the Rebellion of some Creatures will not diminish the Extent of God's gracious Designs; the Continuance and Accomplishment of which was the Reason why, after the Fall of Angels, he pleased to Create Man, and endue him with a power of Procreation, that he might multiply himself to Infinity; and God's gracious Designs be continued and fulfilled in as ample a Manner as he at first intended.

XII. *The Fall of Man was foreseen by God as of a possible Event.* XII. Now Man was not created till after the Angels had sinned; God had therefore an Idea of Sin, and did in some respect foresee it; not as a Thing of a certain Event, and consequently not decreed in all in its Circumstances; but he foresaw it undetermined, and of a possible Event.

XIII. *God hath endeavoured to preserve Man from Sin.* XIII. And because God and Sin are infinitely contrary to one another, it follows that he used all possible Means to preserve his Creature from it: Hence I infer the following Principles which well deserve to be consider'd.

*Three Principles inferred from hence.*

1. That God would graciously fore-arm Man against the Fall of Devils, by all the Means which infinite Wisdom and Power could find out.

2. That in order to perfect him in Holiness, and preserve him from Sin and Error, God would Communicate himself to him, and to all his Faculties, as they were capable to admit his Influences.

3. That, before Man's Creation, God designed to fill his Faculties with their Supreme Felicity; and actually did, as far as was necessary to preserve him from Sin, and to improve him in Grace and Vertue.



XIV. In Conformity to these Truths, God, when he Created Man, was pleased to give him a Body, and with it a World of Creatures, and to endue his Soul with much more lively and powerful Faculties and Relations to this Body, which together with the Creatures of the Universe, makes lively and powerful Impressions on him, than the Angels can be supposed to have had in respect of Bodies. Hence if Man did foolishly disapply from God, his Faculties Divine were armed before-hand against so terrible a Lapse, as that of the Angels was. Not that, absolutely speaking, Man was incapable of committing the very Sin by which Angels fall. He was endued with Faculties Divine as well as they; and God continually irradiated upon them, as he had upon the Angels, his Light Divine, his Spiritual Delights and Joys, which, had he absolutely will'd it, Man might have appropriated to himself as Principle and End, and so have imitated the Devils in their Sin and Fall. But if we suppose that Man was inclined to be distract from God, among the Infinity of Objects which continually made Impressions on him, it is more likely he would apply to some Object of the Universe, rather than himself; because their Impression on him was immediate and direct, to be left without the assistance of Reflection, whereas to fix upon himself required reflexive Acts of Mind, which are not so easie, or at hand, as a Delectation caused by the Impression of Objects that act directly on the Mind: Nor would the Divine Faculties be violated, nor God be rejected in so direct a Manner, as was before observed.

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XIV. It follows hence, that the Body which God gave to Man, in case he depart from God, renders his Fall less dangerous, and more capable of Recovery.

XV. A second Inference is, that since Man's inferior Faculties were in some manner capable of enjoying God; and since it was easie for God to hold a Corporeal Communion with him, it follows, that he did not only design, but did really assume a Corporeal Form, at Man's Creation, graciously to provide for the Necessity of his Creatures, and prevent in a Corporeal Form, as their greatest good; and as a most powerful Motive to a good Regulation of themselves: It is not reasonable to think God would deny them so great and advantageous a Grace.

the

Chap XI. the danger of a Distraction, by the too lively Impressions of Worldly Objects, and of his Reason, Senses and Imagination. For tho' external Nature was from God, and gloriously represented his Perfections, it did not so lively and directly lead to him, but that Man might easily stop at Natural Objects and Sensations without rising up from them unto God; and therefore to guard him against the danger of Sin and Error, by applying to Material Objects, it was easie for God to take a Portion of Matter, or a particular Body, to animate it with a Created Spirit, and to unite himself so closely to it, by his Power, his Light, or Word, and his Love, that this Creature, or Divine Body, animated by him, shall be the proper Body of God himself; an Instrument of Communion between God and the inferior Faculties of Man, whereby Reason, Imagination, Passion, Sense, shall be Exercised, Impressed, Entertained, Delighted, and Man conducted in all his Ways, God himself condescending, in a Corporeal Form, to be his Companion in the Contemplation and Enjoyment of his Works: All which it was easie for God to do, by the Instrumentality of a Body, and so far to signalize his Love to Man, as to Felicitate even his Corporeal Faculties with the Vision and Enjoyment of God himself united to a Body and Soul, and Familiarizing and Conversing with him: This was for certain the supreme Felicity of Man's Corporeal Faculties, and seeing they had need of this gracious Condescension, to prevent their immoderate Application to the Creatures, and preserve them from Ruin, I conclude, according to the three Principles abovementioned, that, at the Creation of Man, God did not only design; but did actually vouchsafe this Felicity and Enjoyment to his inferior Faculties.

**XVI.** That  
the Scriptures  
do fully  
confirm  
this Truth.

**XVI.** I should of myself never have discovered these Glorious Truths, if I had not been led into them by the Lights which God hath graciously communicated to some Saints, \* one of whose writings I would freely cite, having been by them led to the Knowledge

\* See Monsieur Bourignon Pierre de Tonche.

ledge of the solid Principles of all Things; but that I purposely confine myself to Scripture Evidence: Its authority supports these Truths, and Stamps them with the Character of Divine, they who desire to be ascertained of it, need only to consider the account it gives of God's conversing corporeally with Man after his Creation; how he appear'd unto, walk'd and discours'd with *Adam*, among the Trees of the Garden, a little after his Fall, and also how God (then made Man,) appear'd in a Corporeal form to *Abraham*, and to many other Saints, as *Jacob* who strove amorously with a Man, who was no other than God himself, as that Patriarch affirms. \* *I have seen God face to face.* That He appeared in the same manner to *Joshua*, *Guidon*, *Manoah*, *Elias*, *Isaiah*, *Ezekiel*, *Daniel*, especially to *Moses*, with whom he convers'd Face to Face, as a Friend converses with a Friend, tho' veil'd with a Cloud, because of the Infirmary of Man, who, being now become Gross and Mortal, could not sustain the lively glorious Impressions of the body of God, Bright, and Glorious like to *Adam's* at his first Creation: And farther, that when *Moses* pray'd, † *I beseech thee shew me thy Glory:* † *Exod. 33. 8.* God Answered, *Thou canst not see my face: For no Man shall see me and live, but stand upon the Mountain, and I will pass by thee, and will cover thee with my hand, till I am passed by, then I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts, but my face shall not be seen.* And that the History notes, how these particulars happened in all their material Circumstances; than which one cannot desire a more precise and clearer Proof of this Rare uncommon Truth, tho' the whole Conduct of the *Jews* by God's Corporeal Presence, which the Scripture calls the Angel or the Messenger of God, and affirms him to be God himself, confirms it: But it is needless here to enlarge seeing I shall have occasion hereafter to touch upon it.

XVII. If any ask, from whence did God take this Body? I answer, No doubt from some part or other of the Material World, in which none can be found more proper than the Body of *Adam*, to whom was given

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\* Gen. 32. 30.

† Exod. 33. 8. Ch. 34. 5.

XVII.

That God took a Body from given Adam.



Chap. XI. given a Principle of Fecundity, to produce Creatures like himself, and when God was graciously pleas'd to converse with Man in a Body like his own, and found in him a matter proper to form it of, the taking of which would unite him more closely to him; make him the Son and Brother of Man, it is reasonable to believe that God would rather make use of it, than of a Portion of Air, or Earth, or any part of the Material World: And it is observable, that the Scripture often calls Jesus Christ, who is this God, or the Eternal Word, united to the Human Nature, the Son of Man, or Second *Adam*, as also the Brother of Man.

XVIII.

*God, made  
Man, be-  
comes the  
Guide and  
the Savi-  
our of  
Men.*

XVIII. Here then we see God converse with Man, in his own form and Nature, we see him, his Guide, and ordinarily present and conversing with him, to prevent his Fall; and sometimes absenting himself, as well to keep him in fear of being deprived of God, as to excite his Desires of him, and hereafter the Great Concern of God, made Man, will be for Man. He will be with him in all his ways to preserve and feed, to direct and counsel him as a Faithful Friend and Brother. He will raise him if he Stumble; if he become dark and Mortal, Brutish and depraved, and this Great God, (whom I will hereafter call Jesus Christ,) after he hath withdrawn his Corporeal Presence from him, sees that 'tis necessary to renew his familiarity with him, to deliver him from Sin and Death, he will lovingly condescend even to assimilate himself unto him in his Frail and Mortal Nature, to load himself with the Miseries of Corruptible Man, as the Event hath verified, though this is not the Place particularly to treat of these stupendious Mysteries of Love.

XIX. Tho'

*God did  
continual-  
ly impress  
the Soul  
and Body  
of Man;  
Man was  
free to ad-  
mit Crea-*

XIX. The familiar Converse of God with Man, in a Human form, was, no doubt, a powerful means to preserve him from Distraction, and from fixing immoderately upon other Creatures, or his Natural Sensations. He was however absolutely free in respect both of the External Conduct of his Body, and his Senses towards their Objects; and of the Inclination of his Affections, Passions, Imagination and other Thoughts: And as God, by his Divine and Human Na-

tures

tures, continually made Impression on his Faculties Chap. XI.  
both Divine and Inferiour : So likewise his own Sensa-  
tions and Faculties with the Objects of the Universe  
continually made Impression on him, and he, being free,  
could dispose his Conduct with Reason or Excess.

XX. Had Man accustomed his Faculties to an ha- XX. Man,  
bitual Application to the Divine interior Light ; had *for want*  
his Liberty not consented too fully to the Impres- *of Use*  
sions of exterior Objects, and to the Exercise of the *and Expe-*  
inferior Faculties, and to the delicious Sentiments *rience, in-*  
received by them ; tho' perhaps his Correspondence *clined too*  
with God had not been the most confirmed and strong ; *much to*  
it had been morally impossible he should have fall'n : *the inferi-*  
But for want of Habit and Experience in good ; for *or Objects*  
want of an Idea of Evil, and of keeping a guard up- *of Reason,*  
on himself in sensual Enjoyments, as seeing nothing *Imagina-*  
but what was Good, he, tho' blest with the Pre- *tion and*  
sence and Conversation of God himself, loosed his *Sense.*  
Application to exterior Impressions of Sense, Ima-  
gination, and the beautiful Ideas of the Creatures.

XXI. Even that Divine presence, which was a pow- XXI.  
erful Means of recalling Man, served by abuse to Man, by  
distract him more and more. For when, notwith- *abusing*  
standing his immoderate Applications to the Crea- *God's Cor-*  
tures, and to Creaturely Impressions, God still com- *poreal*  
municated to him, he imagined there was no danger *Presence,*  
of losing God, tho' he continued still acting as he did : *obliged*  
Thus the Divine Impression was hurtful to him, ser- *him to*  
ving to corrupt him more and more, to make him fan- *wishd. as*  
sie himself secure and approved by God : When these *it, so to*  
abuses were seen by God, who cannot co operate *bring him*  
with his Creature's Sin, nor always behold the dis- *to himself*  
orders of a foolish Creature, who was ready to de- *and pre-*  
spise the familiar Conversation of God himself ; to *vent his*  
prevent the Continuance and Increase of Evils, in *Fall.*  
infinite Grace and Mercy, and not in Anger, he  
withdrew his Corporeal Presence, that Man might  
learn by this Privation to reflect on the Cause there-  
of, and be precaution'd against greater Evils : I say  
in infinite Grace and Mercy, since otherwise he  
would probably have fallen, not only sooner, but  
into greater Evils. Had God still continued to con-  
verse

Chap. XII. *verse with him, notwithstanding his Infidelity to his Lights and Graces, he would have been hardened in Blindness and Security; the Divine Remonstrances would have been the Subject of his Rage and Spite, or of his Contempt and Ridicule as trifling and formality: Or if in Complaisance to God he had regulated his External Behaviour, while he Indulged his Inclinations in Sensual Excess, he had fallen into gross Hypocrisy, a Sin almost as desperate and incurable as that of the Fallen-Angels.*

## C H A P. XII.

### *The History of the Continuation and Consummation of the Sin of Man.*

I. *Man being distracted from God, Corruption entered into the Creatures to them; especially since God had withdrawn his Cor- and made poreal Presence. In Proportion as He disap- ply'd from them In- God; so his own, and the Creatures Constitutio- n decay'd in Life and Vigour, their Beauty, and Lu- minous force depended on the Mutual Communicati- on of God (the Source of Good,) and Man; of God and the Creatures by the Means of Man, whose Ad- hension to God derived Blessings on the Creatures Subjected to his Government, so to be by him pre- served in their Original Constitution and good Order: Thus, when He was disap- ply'd from God, the Divine influences failed, not descending upon Man so plentifully as before; nor could he conse- quently Communicate them as usual to the Sub- ject Creatures; but on the contrary depraved their Constitutions by his Irregular Conduct. Here then we see the Principles of Corruption entered into the Creatures; and because it is the Nature of every thing both in Heaven and Earth, especially of such*

I.



HE rays of the Light and Love Divine continued to shine upon the faculties of Man, to recal him to God; but he was not attentive to them: He felt their Impression; but instead of disengaging from Exterieur Objects, he inclined more strongly

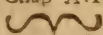


as do most nearly concern him as his food, &c. to Chap. XII. make Impressions upon him, hence his Faculties and Corporeal Constitution were tainted by them.

II. It pleased God then from time to time to renew his visits unto Man. 1. To advertize him to abstain from eating the Fruit of a certain Tree, predicting that his eating of it would occasion his utter Ruin, and Subject him to Death and Corruption. 2. To Substitute a Woman to be with him in the place of God, who, for reasons already mentioned, could no longer converse with him. Both these Events are but briefly touch'd on in Holy Scripture, and tho' some illuminated Persons have Spoke more particularly of them; it is not easy to comprehend their meaning: Some say that the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was originally Created and designed for Man to feed on, as well as other Trees, before the Divine Prohibition. Others have said that Mans Irregular Imagination did produce it, and that therefore he ought to abstain from it. I will here simply propose my Thoughts upon the text of Scripture, leaving all Men free to admit or to reject them: I propose them only as Conjectures of an Inferiour Evidence to those other Truths advanced by me for Certain and Indubitable, as being necessary Consequences of clear and certain Principles.

III. The Scripture says that God forbid Man eating the Fruit of a certain Tree, called the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and adds that Death would be the Effect of feeding on it; and that this Tree appeared, \* Good for Food, pleasant to the Eyes, and a Tree to be desired to make one Wise: The Original may be rendred, a Tree of Experience, or of Experimental Knowledge; a Tree Good and Evil: My Conjecture is that this Tree was not only Created for Mans use, but that it excelled in the Beauty, Sweetness, and Virtue of its Fruits all others in the Garden, wherein Man was placed: And I might add, as plants have ordinarily particular Relations both to the Constitutions of the Heaven, and to the parts and functions of the Human Body: So it is probable the Fruit of this Tree was singularly useful to awaken

Chap. XII. and Invigorate the Imaginative Powers, as having in it, as well as Man, the Impressions of the Celestial Bodies proper to this Effect: But let it suffice to note, that Man, whether allured by its Beauty and particular Sweetness; or whether (having perhaps already tasted of it,) his Sense was more flattered, and Imagination awaken'd by it, was immoderately inclined to, and desirous of its Fruit: And hence he became more Insensible to the Divine Lights and Drawings; and more and more distracted from them, incapable to derive upon the Creatures the Heavenly Benediction; especially upon such as he affected most: The more he adhered to any Creature, the more distract and disengaged he was from God, the fountain of those Blessings which passed through him, as thro' a Channel, on the Subject Creatures: That Creature which he loved and desired most, received least of the Heavenly Influence, while he continued disengaged from God, and therefore supposing, as the Scripture says, that this Tree was particularly good for Food, pleasant to be seen, and desirable to make one wise, to assist the force and vigour of the Imagination: Supposing further that Man did extraordinarily desire it, as is supposed and imply'd. 1. In the very Names of it, which generally are taken from *Adam's* Desire of it. 2. In the Divine Prohibition, and 3. In *Adam's* Transgression Subsequent thereto: It follows that *Adam* by withdrawing from God, his Affections and Desire, and fixing them on this Tree, could not convey to it, or to other Creatures, that Divine Blessing necessary to preserve them in a good Estate: For want of which Blessing, its Constitution, Fruits, and juyce were poysoned and depraved, and apt to produce similar Effects on Man; to poyson, ruin, produce trouble and disorder in his Body; to make him all over Irregular, Brutal, Stupid in his Constitution, Faculties, and Sensations: And in a word to Complete his Fall; which God foreseeing and desirous to prevent, gave him this Charitable Admonition. Of every Tree of the Garden thou may'st freely Eat: But of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not Eat, for in the day that thou Eatest of

it thou surely die : Or thou shalt lose thy Incorrupti- Chap XII-  
bility, and become Corruptible and Mortal. 

IV. The Divine Admonition was for a while Effectual. IV. *Least*  
al, partly from Love to God : Partly from fear of Man  
disobeying him, and being undone thereby : Tho', as *should*  
yet, Man did not understand what Death did mean, *grow more*  
which he was threatened with. His great adhesion to, *and more*  
Creaturally Impressions, had very much weakened, *depraved,*  
but not extinguish'd in him the Light and Love Di- *God re-*  
vine : He did not directly turn his Faculties Divine, *solves to*  
his Intellect, and Spiritual Love, away from God to *give him*  
place them on himself, and his own Spiritual Advan- *a Help-*  
tages ; but the Inferiour Faculties were the Immediate *meet, so*  
Subject of his Abuse : And these he turned not to *to recover*  
ward himself, but External Nature, the adhesion to *him to*  
which is not so Spiritual and Inferiour an Act, as is *the Con-*  
the adhesion to ones self, so that God notwithstanding *templati-*  
shone upon his Soul, causing the rays of his Love to *on of Hea-*  
eradiate ; tho' Man's perception of it was not so sen- *venly*  
sible and lively as before he had, by applying his In- *things.*  
feriour Faculties to the Creatures, darkened and de-  
based his Divine : But as depravation increased daily,  
and Man, since God withdrew his Corporeal Presence,  
was affected only by Impressions of Created Objects,  
unworthy the Love and Application of his Immortal  
Nature ; to assist and preserve him from too great a  
Brutality and Debasement, which his Application to  
these Objects was like to Subject him to ; it pleased  
God to Substitute in his room, one who should be a  
Friend and Companion unto Man ; whose Conversati-  
on might be a means to raise his Contemplation up-  
wards, and take off his Affection from Created Ob-  
jects : This Design of God, to give to Man a Woman  
to be with him, is thus exprest in Scripture. *It is not*  
*good for Man to be alone, let us make him a help*  
*meet for him.*

V. At first God created all things very good, and V. *Woman*  
in a very good Estate, and here in the solitary State *was given*  
of Man, we see a Privation of Goodness : it is not *to Man to*  
good for Man to be alone. Now all Privations of *prevent a*  
Goodness necessarily come from a Disapplication from *greater*  
*lapse, and*  
*to fix him in the Contemplation and Love of God,*  
I 2 the



Chap. XII. the Sovereign Good, *i. e.* from God, and an adhesion to that which is not the Sovereign Good. This pre-supposes *Adam* to have contracted already some Infirmities, and to have begun to debase his Affections towards Creatures Inferiour, not only unto God, but to himself, and to relieve him under his downward Inclination, God was graciously pleased to give him an Assistant; one, not to aid him in his Corporeal labour, which was not yet imposed; but, to raise him from that infirmity which inclined him too much to mean material things: To help him, I say, God was pleased to give him an Object whom he might love as he loved himself, without contemplating himself directly, which was the Angels Sin: An Object that was a lively Image of the Divinity, and therefore tended to raise his Affections towards God, by teaching him to love the Creature as his Image: and thus we see, so far was God from having decreed Sin, that he try'd all ways and means to hinder it.

VI. Of the  
formation  
of the Wo-  
man from  
Adam  
while he  
Slept.

VI. The Life and Vigour of Man, and of all nature being now decayed, he soon was sensible of it, by frequent returns of lassitude, and want of Spirits; particularly then when the Creatures, especially the Celestial ones, acted with less Vigour on him, as when, suppose, the Sun, whose influence do's chiefly Invigorate his Body, as having a more especial relation to its Powers, was under the Horizon: Then Man was less awaken'd by it, and a faintness (wherein Sleep begun,) seized him, which he felt not at his first Creation, nor shall, in Eternal Life, when things shall be restored to their Original Glory: During this Sleep, God separated the two Principles of Fecundity, which were originally in Man, to form of the one a Woman. This Passive, Moist, Material Principle extracted from him, was the Vessel that contained the Eggs of which Men are Born at present: We must not therefore understand, in too literal a Sense, the Account which the Scripture gives of the Woman's being made of one of *Adam's* Ribs. It is very Common for the Sacred Writers to substitute innocent Expressions, in the room of such as are liable to Abuse: As when it says that *Jacob* went into

*Egypt*

Egypt with threescore and six Souls that came out of his Loins; and so likewise in diverse other like Schemes of Speech. Chap. XII.

VII. The Woman who was taken out of Man, and endued with Faculties Divine, Reasonable and Corporeal; and with Liberty to direct them like to Man, was very short of that Perfection wherein Adam was created. She could not for certain be more Perfect than he was, when she was taken from him; tho' if we consider, that she was formed of the most Passive Principle in Man, that she never had convers'd with God in a Human Form; nor felt the Divine Impressions vouchsaf'd to Adam at his first Creation; that she received the Prohibition to eat of the Tree of Knowledge from Adam, and not immediately from God; in fine, that being without Experience, Conduct, or Habit, she was liable to the first Impressions presented to her: I say, if we consider this, it will appear more than probable, that she was not even of equal Perfection to him. VII. The Woman was Originally inferior in Perfection unto Man.

VIII. Now Man, who knows the Nature of the Woman, his Duty was, to love her as himself, to regard her as one endued with a Soul Divine, and created to be a living Temple of the Divinity; and, in consequence hereof, to be extremely careful of her Conduct and Information; endeavouring to lead her to God whose Image she was, and the Woman's was to correspond herewith, to accompany her Husband in the Contemplation and Love of God. But, alas, these Duties, tho' principally designed by God in Marriage, were little thought on by this Disloyal Couple. The Woman, she, yielding to the first Impressions of exterior Objects, relished them with Delight, and was immoderately desirous of them, suffering her Imagination to ramble after every Sense-pleasing Object; while the Man, leaving her to herself, abandoned himself to like Distractions. VIII. The Mutual Duties of the Man and Woman. Distraction hinders their Performance of them.

IX. Tho' the Rebel Angel, through Hatred of God, and Envy of Mankind, watch'd all Occasions to effect their Ruin; he had no Access to, nor Power over the Devils, in the Fall of Man. He hath of himself no Power over Man. IX. The Intervention of Devils.

Chap. XII. over our first Parents, nor their first Faculties, as hath been evinced. They lived in contrary Elements; he in the Element of Sin and Darknes, and they of Light and Bliss, tho' not in the supreme Degree. Now Light and Good are Durable and Communicative in their Natures, or in virtue of the Constitution received from God; (whose Will is Constant, Productive, Universal, Virtuous) they communicate their Impressions thro' the vast Extent of the whole Created Universe. But Darknes and Evil, being Productions, not of the Divine Universal Will, but of that of the sinful Creature, it is impossible and repugnant for them to act beyond the particular Liberty of the sinful Creature, and such things as are dependent on him; and consequently the Devil was entirely Impotent in respect of Man.

X. That  
the Devil  
contributes to  
the Sins  
of Man.

X. Nevertheless, as the Scripture testifies, he was assisting to the Fall of Man, and still assists to lead Men into Sin; and, as \* St. Paul expresses it, *to Rule this World*. It is worth our while to inquire into the Origin and Increase of the Diabolical Power. \* Ephes. 6. 12.

XI. The  
Source  
and Foundation  
of the Power  
which the  
Devil  
hath, or  
may obtain  
over

XI. It is thus I conceive the Devil's Power to be begun and increased in the World. He is the first Author of Evil and Disorder; and consequently wherever Disorder and Evil is, there is his Element; his Delight, and a Conformity to his Will; and there he hath Power to Act, to Operate and do his Will. This should satisfy them who will not admit the following Supposition, whereby this Matter is set in a clear and evident Light.  
*the Creatures of this World.*

It is to be supposed, that before Man's Creation, and the Angels fall, this Earth, and all that it contains, was the Habitation of the Angels who afterwards rebell'd. These Angels had originally Power to dispose of the Bodies of the Universe, and to direct their Motions as they pleased: But when they Apostatiz'd from God, and thereby deprived themselves

of



of the Light, Love and Happiness Divine, every thing subjected to them fell into Confusion, Darkness and Disorder so as to become a Chaos; which afterwards, God reformed, and from it formed the Earth, and placed Man upon it; till when it was all a Chaos of Irregularity, Confusion, Darkness: Its Matter and Motions subject to the dark Dominion of the Devil, to be governed by his Will. But when God was pleased to raise this beauteous World from it, it was then withdrawn from the Power and Disposition of the Devil. Nor was it just that the Work of God should be subject to his Enemy, who had no right therein; nor was able to receive the Impressions of its Beauty, much less to dispose and direct its Motions. Every thing, I say, was then withdrawn from the Devil's Power; but no sooner did any Creature of the Universe fall into Disorder, but it relaps'd into his Element, and was again united to his ancient Empire, who had Power then after to dispose and govern it in Proportion only to the disorder that was in it.

XII. Now this is true, both in Spiritual and Material Things, as will be clearly conceivable, if we suppose in Spiritual Things, that the Will is free, and that it happens to it even as it Wills: From whence it follows, that whoever doth freely resign himself to Satan, to do his Will, in him the Evil Spirit becomes strong and powerful to commit all sort of Evils and Disorders; and as to inferior Things, both such as compose the Universe, and such as are properly parts of the Humane Body, as the Organs of Imagination, of Sense, the Passions, Brain, Heart, Spirits, Blood, Humours, and his whole Corporeal System, as far as they are used contrary to the Design and End of their first Establishment; or as Man, by his Liberty, Faculty and Conduct recedes therefrom, they become subject to the Devil, who hath Power to act in and by them, according to the degree of their Disorder.

XIII. All that I have advanc'd in the foregoing of the Degrees and Gates of the Power which the Devil hath over the Souls and Bodies of Man.

Chap. XII. Book shews what properly is the End, the Order, Reality and Estate of Things, according to the Establishment of God, and their Original Constitution. It is also there sufficiently apparent how things ought to Conduct themselves, so that I need say no more about them here. Now in order to conceive what degree of Power the Devil hath over any thing, let us suppose an Object endued with twelve degrees of Reality and Perfection, and that by Man's Mis-conduct it loses six : Half of that Object does then come under the Power and Direction of the Devil, who, as it becomes defective in Reality, fills its vacuity or deficiency with Darkness and Confusion ; and so it becomes a Chaos of Confusion, more or less in proportion to the Abuse committed on it.

This now is the Method of Nature in every thing ; so that when Man abuses his Imagination about things of a mean or sordid Nature, it falls from the Order of its Constitution, under the Power of the Devil, who can by his Will alone produce Irregular Motions in it, imprint a thousand dark and wicked Thoughts to seduce not Reason only, but even the Faculties Divine. This is the great Gate through which the Devil enters into the Soul, where otherwise he could never come ; happy they who keep it strictly guarded. In like manner, when any does make his Senses, his Eyes, his Ears, his Taste, his Passions, and external Objects the subjects of Abuse, they presently return to the Dominion of the Devil, to be disposed and directed by him, according to the Extent, Duration and Strength of the Abuse, and to the Loss or Privation of Reality sustained ; or, according as the Faculties are defective in Reality, and by that vacuity or defect are open and prepared for Diabolical Operations, Darkness, Confusion and Disorder : In fine, according as they are more or less degraded from the Order of their Constitutions. Hence all that Power which the Devil hath over external Objects, to dispose and move them as he pleases, to open the Eyes to Vanity, the Ears to Curiosity, to whet the Appetite to Gluttony and Excess, to incline to Luxury, Intemperance, Wrath and all sorts  
of

of vicious Passions ; and, in a Word, to agitate the Humours, Spirits, and the whole Mass of Blood, by the means of his Diabolical Will, as properly and truly as we move our Members, by the Intervention of our own ; and if Man consent unto his Motions, he enters into his Soul, to sow therein the Seeds of all sort of Vices ; and if long entertained, becomes absolute Master, and Man his miserable Slave. Chap. XII.

XIV. And this is confirmed by Experience, and by Scripture, in which we read of Satan's disposing both of Men and Elements, and of every thing in Nature, a thousand ways ; of his inciting some to Murder, others to Idolatry, Intemperance, Madness, Pride, Impiety, Treason, lying to the Holy Ghost, and to infinite other Sins, which increase and multiply every day to that degree, that the far greater part of the Inhabitants of this wicked World are, like Machines, moved and animated by him, according as St. John, in his Visions, \* foresaw the whole Earth subject to the Dragon, and thereupon cryed out, † *Wo to the Earth, and to the Inhabitants thereof, for the Devil is come down unto you, having great Wrath ;* and it is upon this account that the Scripture so earnestly exhorts Men to arm themselves against the Devil, by purity of Body and Soul ; not to give him any entrance, that he may find nothing in us, in the Soul, the Will, the Imagination, Passions, Senses, and Corporeal Powers, of his own Element or Dominion, under which whoever falls, is filled with Darkness, Confusion and Disorder. Indeed, his whole Business is to watch whether by Disorder or Abuse we subject any thing to his Dominion ; for which reason St. Peter does well advise, \* *Be sober, be vigilant, because your Adversary the Devil, as a roaring Lyon, goes about seeking whom he may devour, whom resist stedfast in the Faith,* i. e. Preserving the Soul in a continual Elevation toward God, and the Light which comes from him ; so as never to yield to Irregular Imaginations and Desires ; by which, as thro' a wide open Gate, the Devil enters ; that cursed Spirit who stands watching every where, and upon all Occasions, to bring us into his Snares.

XIV. The Holy Scriptures confirm these Truths.

\* Apoc. 13. 3, 4. † Apoc. 12. 12.

\* 1 Pet. 5. 8.

XV. Thus



Chap XII. XV. Thus he caused our first Parents fall from a State of Amity with God and eternal Life, into eternal Death; as is particularly related in the Holy Scriptures, on the Text of which it is not improper to make some short Reflections.

*XV. A particular account of the Temptation, the Serpents Intervention, and his Shape.*

Among the Objects which occasioned the Woman's Fall, the Scripture speaks of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, and of a Serpent that perswaded her to eat of its Fruit. Now the Creatures being as yet not very short of the Glory of their first Establishment, to be sure the Serpents form was not so monstrous and terrible as at present. This is self-evident, and all that the Scripture says upon this Subject evidently proves it: Thus when it says, that after Sin the Serpent was condemn'd to crawl upon his Belly; it implies, that before it, he walk'd erect; which is also implied in his being condemned to eat the Dust, *i. e.* to crawl with his Head upon the Earth; and they who think that the Serpent took of the Fruit of the Tree, and gave it to the Woman, are obliged to own that he had Hands, as well as that he walk'd upright. His speaking shews that his inward Organs were disposed like those of the Human Body; for tho' it be certain that the Devil can speak by the Air, or Organs in no wise resembling those of the Human Body; yet at that time he could not, because he had no Power over any Creature except what he afterwards had over the Serpent. Again, when the Scripture says, that God put Enmity between the Serpent and Mankind, it implies that before they were familiar, as is apparent from his familiarity with *Eve*; which is a further Confirmation of his resembling the Human Shape; Familiarity being an effect of Likeness: Which is also proved in that the Devil used the Serpent's Body to counterfeit himself an Angel of Light, or Messenger of God; the Scripture is very express, that he spoke to *Eve* by the Organ of a Serpent, made her to believe the Divine Prohibition to be by them not rightly understood; that it was perhaps of a limited Duration,

tion, that the term of its Obligation was expired, Chap. XII. and that they might lawfully then after eat of the Fruit, attesting God to the Truth of what he said, GOD DOTH KNOW. Now his counterfeiting an Angel of Light, makes it probable, that he appeared in a Human Form, as Angels used to do, which, it is certain, was the Serpent's Primitive Shape ; and whereas the Scripture says, that he was cunning or prudent above all Creatures, it argues, that he was Ingenious to imitate Man's external Behaviour, Motion, Speech, Actions, Gesture, because this is the only Idea one can form of Prudence in a Beast, who is not animated with a Soul Divine ; and this Imitation plainly argues a resemblance in the Fabrick of his Body, which whoever desires an Idea of, and of its Machinal Functions, may see a pretty just Description of by *Des Cartes*. To this I shall only add, that some Persons \* illuminated by God, have confirmed this Truth ; to the Light of whose Writings I owe the discovery of it, being very sensible I should never of my self have come to the Knowledge of it, however plainly it is revealed in Scripture to an attentive Reader.

\* The Author of Theological and scandalous Con-  
versations

*in Entret. 4th says, it was the Opinion of St. Basil. See M. Bourignon. traittè du Nouveau Ciel, &c. Lettre 5. Artic. 178.*

XVI. As *Adam*, by a too great Affection to the most beautiful of Trees, had stopt the Divine Influence and Benediction on it, and instead thereof brought a Curse or a Privation of its Original Perfection ; so the Woman by a too great Affection to the most beautiful of Beasts, subjected it likewise to a Curse. By disapplying her self from God, and receiving the Impressions of this Creature with too great a Delectation, she caused both her self and it to fall from the Order of their Nature, and subjected both to the Power of the Devil. This gave him a huge Advantage. For tho' *Adam*, by his Irregular Affection to the Tree, had subjected it to his Power, he could not however speak by it : But the Serpent is a proper Organ to speak, and address his Temptations to him by : Accordingly, by the Direction

XVI. The Woman seduced by the Serpent ; and the Man by the Temptation of the Woman.

**Chap. XII.** rection of the Devil, he is made to speak, to walk to the Tree, to entertain the Woman with Discourse about its Fruit, and to present the Temptation to her; the Manner in which he did all this, pleased the Imagination of poor *Eve*; and hence the Devil gained more advantage to bewilder her Imagination more and more, to distract her Senses and her Passions; whereupon Reason, in favour of the Temptation, suggests the Excellence of Knowledge, and of reasoning well, of knowing every thing, and having clear and distinct Ideas of Good and Evil, that Advantages like these cannot be purchased at too dear a Rate; that the Divine Prohibition needed not so strictly to be regarded, that perhaps God might not see, or seeing not regard it. Poor *Eve*, her Imagination was too well pleased with the Serpent's deluding Arguments, for her to stop in so smooth and pleasant a Way, or refuse her self the Advantage of refining her Spirit, and attaining Knowledge by a Fruit of so charming Beauty: The Prospect of these Advantages increas'd her desire of it, and in fine, she eats of the forbidden Fruit, and by her perswasion, *Adam* he also ate. *Adam*, I say, entic'd by the Beauty of the Fruit, by his Taste, his Senses, Passions, Irregular Imagination, by a desire of perfecting Reason by a new Experiment, and reasoning justly on all Occasions, by a Love to his Wife, he who should have said *Anathema* to whatever drew him off from God, forgetting God and his Charitable Admonition, consents to fulfill the Will of the Devil, and of his own Corruption.

**XVII.**  
How  
Death  
passed o-  
ver all.

**XVII.** And thus the Divine Faculties of both Man and Woman were separated from the Light and Love Divine, and inclined to inferior Objects as their Principle and End, their Light, and Object of their Acquiescence and Delight. By the abuse of Liberty, Reason is depraved, Imagination abandoned to vain and miserable Objects, the Senses to an unbridled Liberty, the Passions and Sensibility of our Nature given up to the Impressions of every Object. These Faculties could no longer derive any influence of Light and Happiness from the Divine, because they were



were deprived of God, the only Source thereof; nor could they consequently transmit any to external Nature; so that the Devil's Power increased daily over exterior Things, and by means of them over the Soul and Body of Man, and over every thing subjected to him. All which by the Sin of Man fell back into a Chaos of Misery and Darkneſs, concerning which I ſhall ſpeak hereafter.

XVIII. Here we ſee the Accompliſhment of Sin. XVIII. It is the pure effect of Liberty determining it ſelf, with too great Application, towards inferior Objects, adhering too ſtrongly to their Impreſſions, and regarding that as its End and Principal Object, which is only of an Accessory Nature, or a Mean to its Felicity. Hence the Genealogy of Sin muſt be derived. If Liberty reſolve, the Acts and Conſequences will neceſſarily follow, as I demonſtrated above, when I treated of Preventing Grace; and to what purpoſe is it to hinder Sin without, when that which is within, being held in by force, would only ſwell, harden, and increaſe, to break out again with greater ravage; and ſo would become more Incurable as well as Culpable, draw on ſeverer Punishments, which are juſtly due to the Will, or full formed deſign of finning.

Chap XII.

That Sin is the ſole Effect of Liberty: That the Intervention of other things is only Circumſtancial, and Sin might have been committed a thouſand ways without them.

---Patitur penas peccandi ſola voluntas.

Nam ſcelus, intra ſe, tacitum qui cogitat ullum,  
Facti crimen habet.

Hence it appears that the Tree, the Serpent, &c. were only external Circumſtances of Sin, that aſſiſted at its Birth; tho' without them, it might have been brought forth. Every Creature might have been inſtrumental to the Fall, if Man had placed his Affections on it, as fully as he did on the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge. The Stars, the Elements, Metals, Flowers, Fruits, Animals, his Wife, himſelf, might have been occasions of it; had he, drawing his Affections off from God, ſought Happineſs and Delight in any of theſe contrary to, or beſides the Order, End and Conſtitution of their Natures. That  
a Tree

Chap. XIII a Tree and Serpent were the unhappy Occasions of it, was not from Necessity, Fate, nor from any unlucky Qualities in these Things: Their Intervention was purely Accidental. The Liberty of Man thought fit to fix upon them, tho', when distract from God, it might have fix'd on infinite other Objects, and thereby have fallen into as deep an Abyss.

It is therefore clear, that the Sin of Man in its whole Progress and Circumstances is contrary to the Will, Decree, Consent and Divine Permission. That Man was not destined to the Commission of it: Nor did God concur in his Temptation or his Fall, by determining the Motions of the Woman, the Serpent, or his Tongue, or any of the Thoughts, or Spiritual Acts that intervened; and which some impute to the Divine Conduct; others to his immediate Impulse and Operations, others to eternal Fore-sight and Decree. All which are horrible Blasphemies, proceeding from the ignorance and darkness of the Mind of Man; and from that miserably depraved Reason, which, by disapplying it self from God, was fill'd with Confusion and Chimeras: Ignorant they are of that Liberty which God hath given to Man, by which to govern all things that were subjected to him.

### C H A P. XIII.

#### *Of the Effects of Sin in Man, and in Nature.*

I. Of the Effects of Sin, that they do not proceed from the Divine Decree or Will. But are natural Consequences of Sin.



S Light, and Joys ineffable, are certain Consequences of Holiness and Virtue: So Darknes, Sorrow and endless Misery are natural Effects of Sin; and both these Effects are infinite in Degree, in Variety and in Duration: The Fundamental Reasons of these Effects, with reference to the Faculties Divine, have been touch'd upon in

the \* Oeconomy of the Creation, which I commend Chap. XIII  
 to the Consideration of my Reader : I will here speak \* Cr. 14,  
 a little of them with reference to the inferior Facul- and 15.  
 ties, and to external Nature ; and consider briefly  
 how things had gone in case the Redeemer had not  
 intervened ; and Man after his Fall, had been left  
 to himself, as the Rebel Angel was : And here I pre-  
 mise an Observation, viz. That as Sin it self is the  
 pure effect of the Will of Man, without any Inter-  
 vention on the part of God : So the Effects and Con-  
 sequences which I shall speak of, do naturally follow  
 from that Sin without his Intervention : For as Sin  
 is not, so neither can its Consequences be the effects  
 of the Divine Decree or Will ; no sooner is it pro-  
 duced, but it naturally produces its Effect, without  
 any consent of God. They wholly come from the  
 absence of a Conformity with the Will of God, the  
 Effects of which may be conceived as follows ;

II. First, One may conceive in the Faculties Di- II. *Effects*  
 vine, earnest and void Desires, pressing Disquietudes, *of Sin in*  
 extreme Pains, Efforts and Rage in the supreme De- *Man :*  
 gree, a dark Intelligence, terrible hunger after Satiety *Corrupt*  
 and Acquiescence, and nevertheless, loathing, affright, *Nature.*  
 horror and lively terrors at the Manifestation of  
 the Light and Love of God, especially at its full dis-  
 played Glory. One may conceive besides a Research  
 of that which cannot satisfy, restless and anxious Ef-  
 forts after Vanity, Darknels and Confusion, inward  
 and infinitely sensible self-remorse, furious Madness,  
 and enraged Hatred of their very Being and Crea-  
 tor ; and in fine, these tormenting effects eternally  
 increasing : These are the Natural Consequences of  
 the Fall of Man, not that they did immediately over-  
 take him, but would infallibly by degrees had he  
 been left unto himself, as naturally attending the  
 absence of the infinite Good from Faculties infinitely  
 Sensible, Active, and Immortal. And here I note,  
 that when I simply speak of Nature, or of corrupt  
 Nature, or of the Natural State of Man, what he  
 is, is able, or will do of himself after Sin, without  
 the Intervention of God's Grace, I understand all  
 these and the other Effects of Sin, which I proceed to  
 mention.



## Chap. XIII

*III. Effects of Sin in Human Reason. Its Misery, that it is become one of God's greatest Enemies, and most pernicious to Man's Salvation. Horrible Abuses committed with this Idol.*

III. Secondly, Reason being separated from its Sun, the Light Divine becomes absolutely dark, and in this separation utterly incapable to conceive Ideas conform to those of the Arbitrary Divine Conception: It knows, perhaps, that there is a God, All-powerful and Perfect, but because this Knowledge is confuse and void of the Light of the Divine Word, and of the Joys of his Spirit, it can produce nothing but tormenting Monsters and Chimeras: Besides this Source of Blindness, Reason being guided by Imagination, Sense and Passion, its Infatuation is compleated by Pictures, Chimeras, Follies, continually presented by them. Deprived of the Light Divine, and of the Ideas of the Divine Conception, it follows these as its only Guides, tho' the more it is exercis'd about them, the more it becomes involved in Darkness and in Error, as appears by the Works of Men, in all Ages, most celebrated for Science, there being no Opinion, however absurd or foolish, but what hath been advanced by them in one way or other; some even maintaining (by a strange Illusion) that their wretched whimsical Ideas, are no other than the Essential Wisdom of God himself: And as Human Reason, or the desire of knowing Good and Evil, and comprehending every thing by the activity of our Mind, is the Idol which hath mostly estranged Man from God, who seems otherwise to have maintained his Ground against sensible Impressions, till the Devil presented this Temptation, You shall be as Gods, knowing Good and Evil; so it is most affected by the Curse, I mean, of all the Faculties it is most destitute of the Light Divine, when it seeks Contentment and Satisfaction by its Natural Efforts: It is become the most declared and obstinate Enemy of God: When Liberty leaves it to it self, it exalts it self (like the Devil) into the Throne of God, endeavouring to create Light and Happiness to it self, by its natural Acts, its own desires, and attending to its own Ideas, which, tho' mere Chimera and Reverie, it proclaims as the eternal Word, and real Inspirations, and Legitimates nothing but what is conform thereto: Now as in this Estate it is entirely

void

void of God, so solid Truth, which can only come from his uncreated Light which inlightens every Man that comes into the World; must needs be incomprehensible unto it, because this Light can be received only by a Soul that aspires to it, in an entire vacuity of all Lights and Ideas of Reason, and of all desire besides that of doing the Will of God : Chap XIII

*Aucun sans secours ne sauroit se defendre  
D'un million d'Erreurs qui courent l'Assieger ;  
Et depuis q'un E'prit refuse de l'Entendre,  
Quoiqu'il puisse comprendre  
Il n'en peut bien juger.*

Says the pious *Akempis* ; and the God of Truth himself hath sworn, that except \* the Wisemen of the World, the Disciples of Human deprav'd Reason, convert, they cannot see or know, much less enter into the Kingdom of Heaven ; because Human Wisdom is foolishness with God, it is a way of Error and Distraction, as it was to our first Parents. It had been certainly the most extravagant folly for *Adam* and *Eve* to think the salutary Light and Blessedness attainable by the desire of knowing Good and Evil, and by eating the Fruit of the Tree of Knowledge ; since it was the ready way to be deprived of them : Nor is it less extravagant and silly to think one can work out one's own Salvation, and recover the salutary Light and Blessedness, by adorning Reason, and treasuring up Knowledge, by, I know not what, natural Prayers and Desires, and by the laborious Attention of a Soul hungry for the Ideas of Human Reason, i. e. by Means which God hath no where prescribed or taught us in his Gospel. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is different from what it was heretofore. Men substitute in its room the Volumes of worldly Authors, that give deluding hopes of Truth and Happiness, and are of a far more pernicious Nature than the Tree of Knowledge. Our desire of knowing as God's Good and Evil, and of Divinizing our Reason and Ideas, is also infinitely greater and more enormous than that of our first

Chap XIII Parents, who never ran into the hideous extravagance of our new Philosophers, who Divinize their Reason and its Ideas; and besides, we gratifie this corrupt desire of Knowledge, not only without Scruple, but with universal Applause; and whereas *Adam* committed this Sin but once, we repeat it a thousand times. It is not therefore to be wondred at, that Men are at present so horribly estranged from God, and Conversation with him: That some doubt of his interior Operations in the Hearts of Men; and almost all deny that he communicates himself to Men at present: That they who profess to believe it have so different Notions of it, and live as if God and Eternity were mere Chimeras, and all their Interests were of a Temporal Worldly Nature. Such are the Natural Fruits of our adhesion to Human Reason, which, separate from the Light of Faith, is Absurd, Impious and even Atheistical; but having in \* another Treatise deduced these things more largely I forbear to prosecute them here.

\* Cogit.  
Rat de  
Deo, &c.  
in Discursu  
præliminari.

IV. In  
what  
Sense I de-  
rogate  
from Reason;  
and  
in what  
respect it  
is more  
pernicious  
to our Salvation,  
than the  
most brutish  
Vices

IV. I have no design wholly to extinguish, or disapprove the Use, much less the lawful use of Reason. All that I have advanc'd concerning it in the first Book, skreens me from this Suspicion. I only speak of the abuse of Reason; or of its Nature and Operations in a Man deprived of the salutary Light Divine, or who hath not yet recovered, nor doth seek after, nor consult that Light in a due Disposition and Preparedness of Heart; and I affirm of such a one, that Reason produces in him only Monsters of Folly, Error and Perdition, that will involve him in a more certain and deep Destruction, than the most brutish Vices, because it opposes God more obstinately and directly; and Damnation consisting in the being deprived of God, and of the Divine Operations of his Luminous Pretence, the more we oppose them, the greater and more certain must our Misery and Damnation be.

V. The  
Curious  
Productions of Reason  
are only Methodical and Artful Means of running  
our selves.

V. But it is possible some may think, that Reason, tho' separate from God, may find out, and de-

monstrate



monstrate many Curious Things. Now not to enter into the detail of these Curious Things, I only answer, that they are such Follies as Beasts are guilty of when the sweetness of a Bait decoys them into snares of inevitable Ruin. Except in the Regulation of our Conduct we observe a just Proportion between Infinite and Finite Eternity and Time; all that we do is nothing worth; and if Reason fail to do so (as, when separate from God, of Necessity it must) it is despicable and pernicious.

VI. Now all these Disorders and Confusions do not so come from the Divine Decree, as if when Man refuses to apply and give up his Faculties to God, God, to punish him for it, did Decree or Will that his Reason should be obscure and dark; and that it would not be subject to these Disorders without this punitive Decree. On the contrary, could Man, while separate from God, retain right Reason, or any other Advantages of Nature, freely would God give them to him. He envies his Creatures no good Gift, nor deprives 'em of the least Reality; but with an incomparable Patience and Forbearance restrains the Evils, which, except his Providence interpos'd, would overwhelm us in a Moment. But as there is, nor can be any other Source of Light, of Happiness and Truth besides God himself; so Reason, separate from him, cannot be regular and well conducted. To suppose the contrary, supposes God to deny himself as the Source and End of all Things.

VII. It may be perhaps objected, since God hath given to Things a Power to dure, to act and reproduce themselves, even while they are separate from his Grace, as appears in wicked Men: Why is it absurd to say, that they retain Right Reason, tho' separate from his saving Light? Right Reason is only a Mode of Being, but Being it self, and the Reproduction of new Beings are more absolute and real Things; and why may not a Man that is separate from the Light Divine, retain Right Reason, and conduct himself according to it, as well as retain what is more Absolute and Real? I answer. This

Chap. XIII. *tion comes from our Ignorance of the thing in question. Whatever is of an Absolute Nature and Reality; i. e. is given Absolutely, Necessarily Subsists, and endures, and acts whatever happens; but things whose Nature, and Reality depend on their Relation and Correspondence with other things necessarily fall into ruin and disorder, when this Relation and Correspondence ceases. Now the use of Reason, or Right Reason depends on such a Relation and Correspondence. It is the Exercise of our Arbitrary Conception in imitation of that of God: So that if the presence, Knowledge or Light Divine are absent from the Soul, it cannot Arbitrarily deduce ideal Images of God, as not having any solid substantial Knowledge of him by the Light Divine: When God, or the Word Divine do not illuminate a Soul, its fund is dark, and it is without Right Reason. It is naturally and necessarily so: The Divine Decree do's not interpose to hinder or Establish. It is the Necessary Course of Things, Error and Sin and whatever is defective in reality have no need of the Divine Establishment or Decree to make them what they are.*

VIII. *Why  
tricked  
Men do  
on some oc-  
casions use  
their Rea-  
son rightly*

VIII. If now any think that these things are not always and absolutely true; and that Experience shews that many Persons, tho' deprived of the Light Divine, do on many occasions, use their reason rightly; I farther add that Man is not to be considered simply as in his present State, in which, God, by his Grace, indeavours to restore him from the Fall, and continually sheds abroad the rays of his saving Light; but He is to be considered as when separate from God; and what this Separation would have brought upon him, if God had left him in it. Man, now, hath it in his Power to consult the Eternal Light; and tho' the Faculties Divine neither seek nor yet admit it; Reason, nevertheless, is in some measure strengthened and illuminated by it; because this Light is always at the Gate knocking to be admitted by us: But then when it do's reject it, it produces mere Monsters and Chimeras. They who desire to see a large Account of Reasons, Productions, in this State are desired to Read over the Account which

St.

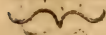
St. Paul gives *Ch. I.* of his Epistle to the *Romans v.* Chap XIII  
21. to the End, relating to the Heathens: and also  
the 2d *Ch.* relating to the Jews, who, tho' they enjoy'd  
the benefit of *Revelation*, measured their Obedience to  
it, by the rule of Depraved Reason, and not of Faith.

IX. As to the Imagination. Before the Fall it was  
Subject to Reason's Conduct, and how it must ma- IX. Effects  
nage this Power after the Fall is easy to Imagine: of Sin in  
Altho', Reason having given it up to the Impressions the Imagi-  
of Sense, of Passion, and External Objects by a full nation. Its  
and free admission of them into the Imagination, it irregular-  
cannot be said to be governed by it; but is wholly rity and  
influenc'd by these Impressions which draw, delude disorder.  
and confound it a thousand ways. So that, in conse-  
quence of the Fall, Imagination will be wholly influ-  
enced by the lively Impressions of Celestial Bodies  
which penetrate, move, and form all Earthly things,  
as Imagination actuates the Corporeal Senses and  
Humours, and is reciprocally impressed by them,  
and this will be a Source of perpetual Errors, Delu-  
sions, and Insensibility unto it: And it may so hap-  
pen that when the habitual Conduct of Liberty hath  
been for a while, machinally as it were, determined  
by these Impressions, if we know the manner in  
which the Imagination first received them, and also  
the Combinations of Celestial Bodies and of their  
Actings, and the Natural Changes happening in them:  
One may easily foresee the future Conduct of the  
Imagination, and by Consequence of the whole Man.  
Upon this Principle Judicial Astrology is built, which  
is not, as some would have it, a Science without  
Foundation. But I do not pretend to speak of the  
Impostures of every Quack.

X. Moreover, tho' Mans Imagination was very X. Misef-  
much attainted by Impressions from without, before rable Ef-  
he Eat of the Forbidden Fruit; his great and terrible fects of Sin  
Fall was not till after he had Eat thereof. The per- in the Body  
nicious Effects of Unwholsome Nourishment, and of Man,  
contagious qualities upon the Body and Mind of Man, and in his  
are generally known: How by them the humours, inferiour  
the Blood and Spirits, and by Consequence the Im- Faculties,  
agination, Reason, and whole Soul of Man are vitiated in conse-  
and depraved. eating the quence of  
forbidden  
Dulcia Fruit.



## Chap XIII



*Dulcia se in bilem vertent, Stomachoque tumultum  
Lenta feret pituita. Vides, ut pallidus omnis  
Cæna desurgat dubia. Quin Corpus onustum  
Hesternis vitiiis, animum quoque prægravat una  
Atque affigit humi divina particulam Auræ.*

So pernicious is the Effect of Poyson, that by it the Constitution of the Body is changed or destroyed, the Soul is stupify'd, and a thousand Disorders introduced: And such the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge needs must be, when his adhesion to it had caused the Divine Benediction to withdraw, and fill'd it with a Curse. By eating of this contagious food his Body was Poysoned, Death and Corruption entred, and overspread his Person, all Nature, and his posterity.

XI. Its Effects in the Passions, and in Reason.

XI. And thus the Humours, Blood, and Spirits of Man were tainted, the effects of which Reason and Imagination tasted, by their Subjection to strange Impressions. The Passions usurped, Dominion inclining immoderately to what was pleasing; and furious against whatever was not pleasing to them. The too great Extent and Exercise which Liberty allowed them, and the Corruption of the whole Mass of Blood, and Humours, and Mans incapacity to reduce these rebel passions rendred their state Incurable by the Power of Man, who was not the Source of Reality; nor united to, Dead as he was to the Light of Faith, and to Love Divine: Hence Reason became more darkened, and confused, tyrannized by the most tormenting, uneasy, violent and furious Passions, whereby he was more estranged from a sober just Morality, than from Right Reason.

XII. Effects of Sin in the Senses and Body of Man, and in the World about him.

XII. We may easily judge what effects Sin had upon the Senses, by those it had upon the Human Body, and Exterious Objects: Which hereby became very limited in their Nature, not Subject to Liberty of Liberty, representing only the outside of Things, and that in a very gross and fading manner compared with their Original State: The Order, Proportion, and regularity of things was disturbed: Disorder every where prevailed, and had the upper hand, in the

the Active powers of Nature; so that life and vivacity Chap. XIII  
 were only to be found in disorder and in an irregular or painful manner: And hence our senses felt no Temperature in things, but heat and cold in the Excess; The Body itself became Dark, Gross, Heavy, Deformed and Monstrous, by reason of the Disorder of its Humours and whole Constitution. Even Man himself was ashamed to see his Monstrous Deformity: He was Subject to Infinite Infirmities and Diseases, every thing in his Nature being out of Order: He might be fitly called a Collection of Grossness, Ebulitions, Obstructions, Hardnesses, Dissipations, bad Impressions from every Creature, Continual Combats, Corruptions, Vermines, Sickneses, and after all Death; in consequence of which he must, whether he will or not, leave his beloved Wife with whom he had too easily comply'd, and the Tree that charmed him with its lovely fruit, and all other Trees growing in the Garden cultivated by his Labour, and the Garden too where his Dwelling was; and the whole Earth, and the short Dominion he had upon it, so unhappily abridged by endeavouring to extend it beyond the Order Establish'd by God among his Creatures.

*Linquenda tellus, & Domus & placens  
 Uxor, neq; harum quas colis Arborum  
 Te præter invisas Cupressos  
 Vlla brevem Dominum sequetur.*

Nor was the leaving them to be regretted by him. No, it rather was a happy Release from the Evils which he himself had produc'd in Nature. For, having forsaken God, and in him the Source of Light and Blessedness, and become hereby such as I have described. Neither He who was appointed to govern Nature; nor his Body through which as through a Chancel the Divine Benediction passed upon the Universe could dispense any thing besides Disorder and Confusion to inferiour Creatures, spoiling and destroying whatever they used. The Creature received no Luminous Impressions from his Body, nor could they Communicate any to one another. The Virtuous Powers

**Chap. XIII** powers designed by their Original Constitution to be actuated, preserved, and quickened by Man who lived among them, decayed, and for want of nourishment dyed away : Or ceasing to rally forth to revive each other, they opposed themselves by inward, Tumultuary, Confuse, Violent Motions and Endeavours.

**XIII. Irregularity of Nature by Sin.** XIII. And thus we see how Light and Clearness, Beauty, Goodness, Tranquillity and Plenty departed from the World ; and in their room succeeded Darkness, Density, Grossness, Corruption, Malignity, continual Oppositions, Barrenness ; all natural Effects of the present irregular State of Nature : From whence at length proceeded all sort of Confusions and Excesses ; the disordered motions and activity of the Creatures dividing themselves, and acting on every side in unequal measures and degrees. And hence the fury of the Elements, the Malign Influence of the Heavens ; the destructive Nature of Fire ; Tempests and the hurtful inconstancy of Fire and Water : Hence the Hardness, Coldness, Opacity, and Corruption of the Earth and Earthly things, and the Production of a thousand Pernicious and Monstrous Things : And in fine, hence the Rebellion of every thing against Man, as was most just, that he by whom Disorder entered into, and disturbed the Creatures, and who could Communicate nothing but Disorder to them, should not be obeyed by them, as before : And here we see all Nature by the Sin of Man ready to fall into a Chaos of Darkness and Confusion.

**XIV. Why the Extremity of these Evils did not befall Man.** XIV. Now tho' immediately after Sin, these Evils were not accomplish'd in their full measure and Degree ; they were however its infallible effects, as the Event would have made appear, had they not been suspended by the Mediatours Intervention : And therefore to conceive the State of Things after the Event of Sin, we must imagine the World to be become a Hell, full of all sort of Miseries, and Man in the Middle of it, as an Incarnate Devil confined to it. Lo, here we see Man in a state far different from that of his Creation ; stript of that Cloathing with which he was array'd when he came forth of his Creator's hands : From a Temple of the Blessed Trinity, and a Friend



Friend of God, from being illuminated by God, and fill'd with Celestial Joys: From reasonable swimming in Delights, from being Lord of all things, and the Channel of the Divine Blessings to them: From Immortal, Powerful, Luminous, Fair, Good, Happy, and fill'd with all Goods; we see him, I say, become wicked, an Enemy of God, Companion of Devils, Ignorant, Tormented with terrour and with sadness, Brutish, Miserable, a Slave, a Source of Malediction, Corrupt, Dark, Weak, Vile, Wretched, laden with Torment, and all sort of Miseries. And whence alas this Cursed Change? Who is the Cause thereof. Who hath consented to it, Decreed it, or Confirm'd it? Is it from God, or from his Decree? Ah, it only comes from the Decree of the Devil and Man; they, they only Willed, Decreed and Consented to it against the Divine good Pleasure, who hath and will imploy all possible means to stop the Course of these pernicious Evils, tho' except Man consent no Remedy can be found.

XV. In the production of these Evils God can be conceived no otherwise concerned than as consenting that Man should be, and continue free: And that his Lot should be as Liberty should chuse: He never directly will'd that Liberty should come into its present Incongruous form: He is a God of Order, and not of Confusion; and the Corruption of Man or Nature is not an Effect of his Order and Decree; but so contrary to it, that he not only used all possible means to hinder it; but after its Event suspended its ruinous Effects in Nature to make way for a Re-establishment of all Things: As will appear hereafter.

XVI. We must not think that the Curse denounc'd upon the Earth, its bringing forth Thorns and Thistles: The Womans painful Child-bearing; Man's laborious Life, and at the Conclusion of it his Death which God declared soon after Sin, were inflicted by him as a Punishment of their Sins, and mark of his Anger. It is a rule of Inviolable and Eternal Truth, of Thorns: The Labour, Pains, and Death, which God declared to Man, are not positive Punishments inflicted by him, nor can be said to punish, but as he permits it to happen to Man, according to his Works.

that

Chap XIII that God never punishes in a positive and proper Sense, inflicting Spiritual or Corporeal Evils: Because 'tis Impossible for God so to do, Evils being a Repugnance or Contrariety of Things to their Original State, which it is impious and absurd to impute to God the Source and Origia of Perfection, Reality, Order, and Agreement to and in all things; but not of privations and Disorders: It is true in Scripture God is said to Punish, when he permits things to happen according to Man's Will and Disposal of them, tho' contrary to their Original Order and Establishment: God needs only leave things to dure and act in the Disorder to which they are reduced by Man, and immediately all Nature, and all that is in Man conspire to oppress him without God's Direction or Intervention, unless he vouchsafe graciously to interpose either to open the Sinners Eyes that he may see his Works; or to defend from these Evils them who abandon themselves to his Divine Mercy; or to relieve the Sinner, if he be disposed to repent, so bringing forth Good from Evil, or lastly to restrain by his Almighty Power these Evils from falling all at once upon the Sinner, not suffering them to overtake him; but by degrees, so to dispose him to reflect upon, and know himself and teach him to forbear to continue and increase the terrible Load.

But when infinite Love sees that there is no hope of his return, it permits Events to happen according to the Natural course of things, whereupon the Sinner naturally falls into the forementioned State of Darkness, Confusion and Disorder as necessarily attending his Separation from God, the only Source of Light and Blessedness: So that God punishes only as a Physician, who, when a Patient refuses to be regular, and to take the remedies prescribed leaves him to his Caprice and intemperance: It is therefore Man alone who punishes himself in that he Ruins, Reprobates and Damns himself. *O Israel thou hast destroyed thy self, but in me is thy help: Thy own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy Backslidings shall punish thee; thou shalt know and see that thy Misery and thy Bitterness do come from forsaking the Lord thy God, and that in*

me there is nothing to be feared by thee. This is the Chap XIII  
sense of the Original: God is a Source of pure Reality  
and Perfection: And Man when he departs from God  
can find nothing else but Vacuity and Imperfection. XVII.

XVII. When therefore God is represented in the *When God*  
Scripture as denouncing a Curse upon the Earth, *is said to*  
pains to the Woman, and labour to the Man, they are *threaten*  
properly no more than Charitable Advertisements *or to pun-*  
what the Natural Effects of Sin will be; that Man *ish Man*  
may accordingly conduct himself, and profit by them: *properly*  
The increase of pain and sorrow at Child-bearing *speaking*  
which he foretold is an effect of his Charity toward *he only*  
Mankind. Should the Woman, now that the Ele- *gives him*  
ments are irregular and corrupt, bring forth soon af- *Charita-*  
ter her Conception before the Infant was strong *ble and*  
enough to sustain the Impressions of the Air, and of *gracious*  
External things, the state of Man would be more Mi- *Adver-*  
serable than at present. All almost would be abortives *tisements.*  
from their Birth: And therefore God's care and love  
for Man, hath graciously provided against this Mis-  
chief, by ordaining that Children should be inclosed  
in the Womb, till they were strong enough not to be  
injured by the Impressions of External things; whose  
good Order had it not been disturbed, it is probable  
Procreation would have been much quicker without  
the Inconvenience of bigness, and of pain which are  
necessary Effects of the present slow Method of Pro-  
creation, and of Sin, and there are some, who in Ho-  
nour to the Virgin State, have believed the Man and  
Woman would have procreated Children without any  
carnal Commerce or Desire, continuing in their Vir-  
gin State, as will appear possible at least, if we con-  
sider that the Vessels which contain the Eggs of which  
Men are Born are in the Woman, and that these Prin-  
ciples of Procreation might have been brought forth,  
by a Love of God, joyned with a Desire of producing  
new Beings like ourselves to love and praise him; and  
in like manner Man might have committed to them this  
Principle of Fecundity purely by an Act of Love to  
God, joyned with a Desire of reproducing Creatures  
like himself to love and praise him, and to Conjugal  
Love would have been only the Holy Desire of two pure  
and



Chap XIII and Virgin Souls, to co-operate in producing Creatures like themselves in the Sole View and Love of God. But Sin being brought forth, it filled the Soul with Carnal, Brutish, Sensual, Voluptuous Desires, all which together with the Corruption of the Elements changed the way of Procreation to what it is, the Brutality of which, Man, immediately on his fall, was so ashamed of that he was forc'd to hide himself. There are moreover, even among Fish, Incontestable Examples of the Possibility hereof; I say the Possibility; because whatever probable Arguments there may be that this was the way of Nature; I pretend not to any Evidence of Demonstration; all I affirm as certain, is, That antecedent to Sin, every thing was in a good and perfect State: And that all Evil, Suffering, and Disorder are Effects of Sin, and not of God, who interposed only in tempering the Sinners Sufferings, and declared them to him only in Charity and Goodwill. He warned him of the Barrenness of the Earth, to prevent his being surprized by want or Famine; by expecting Vainly that it should yield its Fruits, as at first, of its own accord; and charitably taught him to prevent this Evil by Labour and by Care. He predicted to them Pains and Death that they might prepare themselves by Patience, receive it with Humility, as the fruit of their Disobedience, and cease from Committing Sin. Last of all he drove them from the Tree of Life, [which was probably the Fruit reserved by God for the Nourishing his own Body,] Least by a continual eating of it they should perpetuate their Misery to themselves: Worse, infinitely worse had been the State of Man, had God permitted all his own Works then to fall upon his Head. However the little which he began to taste thereof, was only the Effect of his own Sin. *And thus by one Man Sin entred into the World; and Death by Sin.* [i. e. all the Confusions that produce it,] *And so Death passed over all, all having sinned in one.* All the Creatures are Subject unto Vanity, [i. e. to a Vacuity of Good,] not willingly; but by him who hath subjected them  
unto

unto it: [i. e. by Man his using them contrary to Chap. XIV  
the End and Design for which God had made them.]

## C H A P. XIV.

*Of Original Sin. Five Opinions concerning it.  
The four first Rejected.*

I.



H E sad Effects of our first Parents Sin were not limited to their single I. *The De-*  
Persons, but extends to their Po-*sign of the*  
sterity: And this is called Original *following*  
Sin, and is a Subject of incredulity *matters.*  
to some, of Raillery to others, of  
Imaginary Fictions unto many, and

of admiration to many well disposed Souls. Who tho' they do not evidently and distinctly comprehend, do nevertheless in Reverence to the Holy Scripture fully believe this lamentable Truth: Tho' to comprehend how by one Mans offence, all can become Sinners is a Mystery too deep for them. It must be acknowledged that this Truth appears hard to be digested, and some who in general do own the Doctrine; pretend however that it is so Incomprehensible, and Disproportioned, not to say opposite to our Reason that it needs an Authority no less than the Divine to convince us of it. Now I design to shew that Original Sin is a thing most easy and natural to be comprehended, that the contrary Supposition is in all respects impossible and inconceivable considering Man in his Laps'd Estate: From whence this important Truth will be illustrated; but also the absolute Necessity of the Grace of God to remedy Sin by a free Pardon and Efficacious inward operation, will be evinc'd, without which every Descendant of sinful Adam had been a very Incarnate Devil, damned from the Birth.

II. Now some there are who absolutely deny Original Sin: Others, they make it to consist in evil Bents and Inclinations, and then only to be Culpable when fol-  
*II. Four false Opinions concerning Original Sin. A fifth and true Opinion of it.*  
 lowed

**Chap. XIV** loved by us: Others, they fanſie it to be propagated only by the Imagination: Others, by the way of actual Imputation, made, as they imagine, by the Decree or Will of God: All which Opinions are alike abſurd. Moſt true it is, that ever ſince the Fall, Original Sin is not leſs Natural unto Man, than for a Shoot to be of the ſame Nature with the Stock from which it grows: Or, for all things that are contained in their Seeds or Principles, to be actually or potentially of their Nature: But I will endeavour to explain theſe things in a more particular Manner.

**III. The**  
*first Opinion examined.*  
**Liberty**  
*being Culpable, its Faultineſs extends to every thing it is annex'd to; and conſequently the Punishment alſo doth.*

**III.** In the firſt place, ſuch as deny Original Sin, I make no ſcruple to affirm, they are either Wicked Men puff'd up with Pride, or Blind and ignorant of Spiritual Things, or they partake of both. In original, as well as in all other Sin, two Things are to be conſidered, the Guilt and the Punishment; the former is properly committed only by the individual Liberty that Sins. But becauſe this Liberty is only part of a Subject with which it makes one Whole or Compound; and becauſe whatever is in it, is ſubject to its Diſpoſal, its Faultineſs is tranſmitted to all that is contained in it, which is Culpable by virtue of its Natural Participation, *i. e.* ſince the whole is ſubject to Liberties Direction; the whole partakes of its Good or Evil, its Blame or Praise, and of every thing that is common to it; even as every Member of the Body partakes of the good or bad Diſpoſition of the Head or Heart. Or if we deſire to conceive this Truth under another Form: One may ſuppoſe Man's Eſſence to conſiſt in Liberty, and that this Liberty is plac'd in a vaſt Field of Action, and ſtands expoſ'd to an infinity of Objects, with Power to vary its Conduct, with relation to them. Now if Liberty Sin, by applying to ſuch certain Objects, the Faultineſs or Guilt returns on Man's entire Eſſence; and however it Acts then, after his Eſſence and Acting Power, muſt be Culpable, as continuing ſtill the ſame any diversity of Objects, or ways of Acting. For Liberty being Culpable in it ſelf, whatever Object it applies it ſelf unto, it carries its Guiltability with it; and hence we ſee the Extent of the

Punishment



Punishment of Sin, which was the second thing to Chap XIV  
 be considered in it. For Liberty being united to  
 all Objects and Ways of determining it self toward  
 them, it is just that its Union with them should be  
 such as it hath freely will'd, *i. e.* disengaged from  
 the Sovereign Being, whom by its own ill Conduct  
 it hath forsaken; and therefore 'tis just that its U-  
 nion with them should be void of Light and Joy and  
 Rest.

IV. It follows then, that the Punishment of Sin is in- IV. That  
 separable from the Guilt; and that where the Punish- the Pu-  
 ment is, there Sin also is. I do not speak of the Effects nishment  
 of Sin to be found in things of a Brutal Nature, but of of Sin  
 its Punishment peculiar to things of a Living, Immor- cannot be  
 tal Nature. Some portions, or remains of Sin, may laid on an  
 be found, I own, in a Subject absolved from it: But innocent  
 this I affirm, that neither the principal Punishment, Subject.  
 nor these remains, can be inflicted without an ante-  
 cedent Guilt. To deny this is strangely Impious, it  
 is to form a horrible Image of God, and to repre-  
 sent the most Gracious Being as inflicting unspeak-  
 able Torments on Creatures without Sin or Guilt.

V. Now most true it is, that Men are unspeak- V. That  
 ably Wretched and Miserable, even from the Womb; all Men  
 their Souls, and all its Divine Faculties, are ignorant are Sin-  
 and Brutish; their Reason stupid; their Imagination, ners, be-  
 Sense, and other Faculties, irregular and confuse, li- cause all  
 able to be distress'd and injur'd by a thousand Acci- partake  
 dents; unable to help and relieve themselves, lament- of the Pu-  
 ing their Miseries from their Birth, in which the far nishment  
 greater part do perish before they know how to help of Sin.  
 themselves. Now, as no Body who is not ignorant  
 as a Beast, can deny that these are Punishments; so  
 Sin must necessarily be supposed as their Cause; since  
 it is Impious to impute them unto God, or to say he  
 denies his Creatures sufficient Perfections to support  
 and make their Being Comfortable to them: I am not  
 unapprised of the Objections urged by the favourers of  
 Pelagianism, but the Idea given of Man and Nature,  
 in the Treatise of Creation, is a sufficient answer to  
 them.

Chap. XIV

VI. An  
Objection.

If any  
thing be-  
sides the  
individual  
Liberty  
that Sins  
can be  
fauley, or  
partici-  
pate of the  
Sin; the  
affirma-  
tive  
proved.

VI. But how is it possible corrupt Reason acts for Sin to extend to all? Sin is an Act of Liberty that prefers a less to a more perfect Object, the Means before the End. Now Creatures newly born have not acted thus, nor did they exist when *Adam* sinned. To this Objection of prattling Reason I reply, Sin is indeed the Act of Liberty; in it it begins, but does not terminate in it, but extends to whatever is subjected to, and dependent on it; to every thing that is part of, or may arise out of it. Liberty is representative of the whole, whose Lot is in its Hands. It is, as I may speak, pregnant with infinite Liberties, the Seed and Principle whereof are contained in it, which, as they are produced into Actual Existence, will be originally of its own Condition. It is very trifling what the Advocates of Pride and Nature urge, viz. That *Adam* could not Sin in the Name of all, being not impowered to act as their Procurator. Poor blinded Creatures! The Effect will participate of the Nature of its Cause, without the Formality of a Procuration. It is a necessary, immutable Rule of Nature. If, as these Men pretend, only the individual Act that Sins is Culpable; it will follow, that all succeeding Acts, and all the Members besides that which sinned, tho' parts of the same whole will not be Culpable, nor feel the Effects of the Sin committed; whereas Experience shews, that when a Man by Violence, or other Accident, is deprived of Sight, he is blind for ever after, his whole Body is blind, partaking of the Calamity, notwithstanding the first Act of Violence, &c. was past before others were brought forth; and besides, these others are of a different Nature, and belong to other Members: And shall we then complain of Nature, that every Act is not responsible for it self; that it does not bear its Punishment alone; and that the succeeding ones partake of its Affliction; or that the Guilt remains when the Act is past; or that the Sinner retains a virtual Consent to Evil, which he infallibly repeats with a stronger Inclination than if he had not sinned. We are therefore obliged to own, that a whole Subject partakes of the Quality of every

every Act produced by it; and that this Property of Nature, in virtue of which Things tend to dure and to reproduce themselves, is woven into the Frame of every thing. A Principle, which if we follow, will lead us into all the Detail of Consequences necessary upon this Subject. Chap. XIV

VII. But depraved Reason will still urge, that whatever hath been produc'd since Sin, was not Ex-  
 istent, when it was committed, and could not there-  
 fore Sin at the time of its Event; nor be Culpable  
 on its account, and tho' it become so by another's  
 Act, its own however is not Culpable. Now to the  
 first of these Difficulties, I say, A Being, for certain,  
 cannot be Culpable, or Sin in Act, before it actually  
 Exists; tho' it might and did Sin, and was Culpable  
 in its Origin, or to speak more intelligibly, the thing  
 to be produc'd, sinned in such a Manner as it was  
 contained in it. As the Fruit of a Tree is poysonous  
 and depraved in the Tree it self, or in the Bud  
 which it grows. If therefore a Principle or Origin  
 (suppos'd to be free) will not produce any Effect,  
 that which hath no Existence, hath no Evil: But if  
 this Origin will be Productive, its Effects will ne-  
 cessarily be constituted like it self; because Production  
 is only a redoubling of the Origin; or a producing  
 Beings of the same Nature and Constitution. The  
 thing reproduced must necessarily be of the same Con-  
 dition with its producing Principle: Nor is it less  
 absurd for the Effect to be more perfect than its Cause,  
 then for Men to be produc'd by Trees, or for Light  
 and Reality to spring from Darkness and Nothing.  
 To the second Member of this Objection I answer,  
 that the Act of a thing newly produc'd, is Culpable  
 in its Origin, or as it participates of the Nature of  
 its Principle it arises from a deprav'd Origin, and  
 includes in the Center and Principle of its Activity,  
 or as it is an Active Principle about the Inclination  
 of the same Nature with its Origin. The Acts of a  
 Subject habitually Wicked are depraved from their  
 Principle, and every Act does only repeat this de-  
 praved Principle, or produce an Act originally Cor-  
 rupt; were the Acts and their Subjects independent



Chap. XIV on each other, as they would be if they were produced immediately by God, or depended solely on his Will, they would not then be Culpable; but how the Product of a depraved Principle can possibly be Pure, is impossible to be conceived.

VIII. God VIII. If any say, that the Souls of Men are derived *is not the immediate Origin of Souls.* from God, and that he is the only Origin of them. I answer, if this be understood in a mediate Sense, *viz.* that in tracing the Origin of Souls endued with Power to reproduce themselves, we must still ascend, till at last we fix on God. It is true, our Souls are in this Sense derived from him; but they are not in their present State immediate Creatures of his Hands: Properly and directly they derive their Being from that Soul which in vertue of the Laws of Nature, by which every thing is productive of it self, is the immediate cause of its Production: But I have treated of this Matter \* elsewhere, and shall have occasion to resume it in † another place, for which reason I proceed to the second Opinion.

\* 1st.

Book. ch.

7. 14.

† Artic. 11, 12, 13, 14.

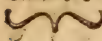
IX. The IX. They who maintain, That Original Sin is only *second Opinion,* an Inclination towards Evil, which is not culpable while the Will does not consent, they speak the *That Original Sin is only the Inclination of an Innocent Subject towards Evil, shewn to be false and absurd* Consequence, but do not observe the Principle; for, whence I ask, does this Inclination come? Why is it to be found in a Subject innocent in all respects? With what Equity can an interior Inclination prone to Evil, and averse to Good, be planted in an Innocent Subject? An interior evil Inclination can come, for certain, only from a Soul inwardly corrupt. A good Plant tends only to produce good Fruit, and only an evil Heart inclines to Evil, tho' it keeps in the and absurd Acts that might flow therefrom.

X. That X. Others who explain Original Sin by the Contagion of the Imagination, seem to me to leave the *the third Opinion,* Question, and to answer to something not concerned in it, which is what Logicians call *Ignoratio Elenchi.* *which explains O.* The Question is not how Children do actually Sin, *Original Sin, by the Contagion of the Imagination, according to the Hypothesis of Malbranch,* by the Contagion of the Imagination, according to the Hypothesis of Malbranch, is remote from the Question.

but

but how they are Sinners, and guilty before any actual Sin. Now they who recur to the Imagination, and shew that whatever Impresses the Imagination of the Mother, infected with Concupiscence, does also impress the Infant's Brain, and makes traces in it, correspondent to those formed in the Imagination of the Mother; and that the same Images being form'd in the Infant's Soul, its Inclinations are hereby of necessity irregular: These Men, I say, supposing their Hypothesis to be true, which I do not at present enquire into, do well enough explain how a new Sin is actually committed by a sort of Temptation at second hand, not much unlike that of the first Man; tho' as to its manner less free and avoidable: But when we enquire about Original Sin, this is not then the Question. It is not, How the Infant's Soul produces necessarily, from its Conception, Acts of Concupiscence? But how before these Acts, particularly Acts resulting from the Union of the Soul and Body, the Soul is guilty, and a Sinner? How *e.g.* a Vicious Person is culpable when the Acts are past or future? Now to shew how it may commit these Actions in presence of such certain Objects does not clear the Matter: For the Soul was Vicious and Culpable before these Acts; and to say, that it hath already done these or these Evil Things; that it hath not revers'd them by contrary Wills and Actions, but remains the same: This, I say, were to leave ones first Answer of the Imagination, and to account for it another way: There is something like this in Original Sin. The first Man *Adam*, who is the root of all Mankind, did Evil before his Posterity existed. This Evil he was, of himself, impotent to destroy, but considered in himself, it still subsisteth in him; and Originally all Mankind were the same as he, tho' they were not actually separate from him by a proper Subsistence of their own. But this belongs to another Article.

XI. As to Imputation, if by it we understand an Act of God's Will or Judgment, whereby he judicially XI. *That the fourth Opinion, which explains Original Sin by the way of Imputation, distinguish'd from Natural Propagation, is absurd and false. It is founded on the Prejudice of the immediate Creation of Souls*

Chap. XIV  imputes the first Man's Sin to his Descendants, without which Imputative Judgment it had not been transmitted in a natural way, and *Adam's* Posterity been either not culpable at all, or in a less Degree. It is in this Sense impossible and absurd, not maintainable by Good Men, unless thro' Ignorance or Prejudice in favour of it, as useful to explain certain Truths of no Relation to it. I say of no Relation, because Truth and Error have no Relation, and to join them is only to produce Monsters. Thus, for Example, it is a Truth allowed by the Men we speak of, that all Men as propagated from their Parents are originally Sinners, antecedent to any Spiritual or Corporeal Actions to be afterwards produc'd by them. It is also a vulgar Prejudice, that Souls are not generated, but created immediately by God; which Prejudice, tho' false, as I have elsewhere shew'd, is generally maintained as an undoubted Truth, and accordingly they endeavour to reconcile to it their Explications of Original Sin. It is ask'd, how a Soul that comes forth immediately from the Hands of God, can possibly have any stain of Sin or Guilt? As Sin is not God's Creature, so he neither does, nor can produce it in the Soul: It is also, as created by him, without any the least Irregularity or Sin, to subject it to a Reprobate, Damn'd Estate. Nevertheless, it is *originally* stained with Sin and Guilt: Now how is this to be conceived? By this Hypothesis it cannot be derived from its Origin or Creation: Nor is it, as they agree, of the Nature of the Soul, nor from its particular Acts; and yet by this Judgment the Soul is culpable, and ought to be so reputed, from its first Existence. This Judgment, I say, is true, and if true, it is so, before both God and Man; and what I ask is the Ground or Reason of its Truth. It is not true by reason of the Subject if considered by it self, and out of this Proposition. The Soul is sinful, not by reason of the Attribute: Nor is there any Essential Union between the Attribute and Subject; and therefore the Reason of its Truth is to be sought in him, that makes this Judgment, *viz.* in God or Man; and because Man's Judgment cannot seal it with the Stamp



of infallible Truth, it follows that the Judgment of God is the Reason of it ; and so we say, that the Soul is Culpable by Imputation, because God, by an Act of his Judgment joins the Attribute Sin to the Soul of Man, or imputes *Adam's* Transgression to all the Souls which he creates, and the Reason assigned for it is because the Soul is united to the Body in consequence of the Act of Procreation ; tho' this is a very trifling Reason, because the Procreation of Man is in it self not Evil ; and because, if it were, God, who is, according to their Hypothesis, the sole Cause of the Union of Soul and Body could not add one Evil to another : As to the pretence of such who say, that Sin is imputed neither to the Body, nor to the Soul of Man, but to the whole *Suppositum* which is produced by the Parents, it deserves no answer.

XII. Let us then observe as a fundamental Principle, that every Spirit created by God, is necessarily Illuminated, Just and Holy ; not indeed in Habit, but Actually and by Origin ; God being the Author of its Being and Constitution, there can be nothing in it unacceptable to him. If therefore the Souls of Men were created immediately by God, they must of necessity be originally Illuminated, Just and Holy.

XII. If the Souls of Men were immediately created by God, they would be Originally Just and Holy.

XIII. Now this is directly contrary to Experience, and to the Doctrine of Original Sin which teaches, that the Soul is originally Impure and Culpable as well as Dark. If then the Doctrine of Original Sin be true, that of the Soul's immediate Creation must be false, as certainly it is.

XIII. The Doctrine of Original Sin is inconsistent with

the Creation of Souls.

XIV. They who suppose Souls to be created immediately by God cannot maintain Original Sin, without being injurious unto him : For the Effect or Product of a Cause that is Just and Good necessarily bears the Character of its Perfections ; nor can it become Unholy, except by its own free Act. That which in it self is Holy, doth persevere in Holiness till it freely admits contrary Impressions presented

XIV. If Souls are created immediately by God, they can become Culpable only by their own free Act.

Chap. XIV

to it. To say, that evil Impressions can be made upon the Soul, and received by it, without its Consent, is injurious unto God, in that it supposes him to have placed our Souls, tho' Innocent and Holy in such Circumstances, that they are infallibly doom'd to Sin, which is a very Impious Assertion ; tho' according to this Supposition, if a Holy Soul be Impotent to defend it self from evil Impressions, and this Impotence be not from its own Default, but from Necessity, it will be in no wise Culpable ; and tho' it were indeed Culpable by this Means, it would be properly not by Imputation, but Actual Sin.

*XV. Three ways of being a Sinner, by Origin, by Habit, and by Act.*

XV. There are only three conceivable Ways of being a Sinner ; by Origin, by Habit, and by Act. The first of these is absolutely rejected by supposing Souls to be immediately created : For hence it follows, that they are Pure and Holy, and there is therefore no room for Imputation ; and they who pretend, that our Souls originally are Pure and Holy, but that God, by an Act of his Judgment, makes them to be Culpable and Impure, suppose God's Judgment to be false and repugnant to their actual State, by judging that to be Depraved which he hath created Pure.

*XVI. To be Originally sinful is repugnant to the Hypothesis of immediate Creation: To be so by Act, is so reign to this Subject: By Imputation, is extreme Absurdity.*

XVI. Next, as to Habit, there are but three Ways of conceiving any to be an Habitual Sinner : By Origin, as when he comes of a corrupted Root ; or by Act, as when he consents to any thing which draws after it an evil Habit : The first of these Ways is, not to be supposed here, because God cannot conceive, that that which is Good by Origin, is habitually Evil by its Origin. The second applied to the Case in hand, is false : For if God does repute and judge, that Souls are habitually Evil, because they have actually admitted a Root of Malignity ; this, on the Soul's part, is not Imputation, but actual Sin ; but if we would have God to judge them to be habitually Evil, who are not such either by Act or Origin, this Judgment would be absurd and false, and by Consequence repugnant unto God the Source of Equity and Truth.

XVII. As

XVII. As to Actual Sin. There are two Ways Chap. XIV  
 of conceiving one to be an Actual Sinner, by either  
 one's own, or another's Act. The first excludes Im- XVII. To  
 putation: The second, if applied to it, is absurd and be an A-  
 false; as, to judge that the Malignity of the Acts and ctual Sin-  
 Thoughts of one Spirit, is the Malignity of another. ner in an  
 What, tho' the first Man thought after such a Imputa-  
 Manner, must I be deemed to have thought so too, tive way,  
 tho' I never did? This Imputative Judgment is ab- is absurd.  
 surd and false, and is as impossible as for Not-Being  
 to be Being: Or for Non-Act to be Act. Imputa-  
 tion of actual Sin is therefore very absurd, and we  
 should have little cause of Fear; nor would God  
 condemn us as guilty Sinners, as we are now most  
 justly treated by him, if we were not otherwise  
 concerned in the first Man's Sin, than by such a Judg-  
 ment of Imputation.

XVIII. Imputation of Sin is a sound of Terror, XVIII.  
 in that it seems to be a mark of Reprobation. But There is  
 there is in Truth no Imputation of it, while the Sub- no Impu-  
 ject does not actually or Implicitly consent thereto. tation on  
 Reality and Good are the only things which God the part  
 imputes; because, being the Source thereof, he may of God,  
 produce it where he pleases, even where it is not. but of Re-  
 He may give it to Creatures unworthy, and treat ality. The  
 them as if they were worthy of it. He may dispense Imputati-  
 his Blessings to them; in Consideration of anothers on of Sin  
 Merit, or of himself, and his own good Pleasure, is not an  
 as being an over-flowing Spring of Good, powerful to Object of  
 realize and fulfil his Will for Good towards his his Power.  
 Creatures: But he is not the Source of Evil, nor  
 can he, by virtue of his Will, Decree or Power im-  
 pute Sin and Guilt unto a Pure and Holy Creature.

XIX. I insist the more upon these Matters, because XIX. The  
 it is necessary to vindicate the Divine Decree from necessity of  
 the Reflections which some Mens false Notions cast vindica-  
 upon it. From God, from his Will, Decree and ting the  
 Judgment, proceed nothing but pure Light, pure Divine  
 Truth, Justice and Rectitude. He never willed the Decree,  
 Being, Increase or Imputation of Sin, or of any which is  
 concerned in the increase of our Impurities, obliges me to enlarge up- no ways  
 on these Matters,



Chap. XV. purity whatever. He is not advantaged by the Realities, and much less by the Evils of his Creatures; and why should he concern himself therein, since Evil cannot exist by him, and exists but too much without him.

## CHAP. XV.

### *The Positive Explication of Original Sin.*

I. The fifth and true Opinion, How the Souls of all the Adamick Race are Sinners by Origin.

I.



T rests upon me to explain Original Sin, by the fifth way, whereby I do conceive every Descendant of sinful *Adam*, is laden with Sin and Guilt; they are so by Origin, *i. e.* because they derive their Nature, Being, Existence, all

that they have and are, from a sinful Root, from which they can derive only the Realities with such Defects and Imperfections as are belonging to their Origin.

II. The Fundamental Principle of this Truth.  
\* 1st. Book. Ch. 7. 14, &c.

II. The certainty of this Truth depends on the following Principle, that every thing is productive of it self; whence I conclude, that the Effect does necessarily participate of all the Realities and Defects of its producent Cause: Having proved this Principle \* above at large, it is now incumbent on me only to deduce some Consequences of it, and answer some Difficulties relating to it.

Ch. 2. 5, 6.

III. Reflections on the different Origins and Endowments of Souls.

III. But I first observe, that the Souls of Men may be considered as derived from many Origins, from some mediately, from others immediately: There is a Sovereign Origin, which is God himself, from whom New born Souls lose no Advantage in respect of their Supreme Origin: And by the inferior Origins they can lose (not their Nature, which is absolutely given, but) their Relative Goods, *viz.* the Light and Love of God, the Son, and Holy Spirit.

whom

whom all Spirits have received their Nature ; the first immediately, the succeeding ones by Means of their Predecessors, who are a sort of inferior Origins. Secondly, I observe, that the Sovereign Origin hath given the Soul two sorts of Gifts, some absolute, as are its Faculties Divine, its Liberty and Nature : Others not absolutely belonging unto Man, so as to make part, or be Essential to his Nature ; (for they are Essential only unto God) but their way of Being in him, is founded upon Relations of Man to them. Of which sort are the Light of the Word Divine, with the Love and Joy of the Holy Spirit, which are given and communicated inseparably, on Condition that the Soul do constantly and freely turn its Faculties Divine towards God. The Nature of the Soul is Absolute and Immortal, of which it will never be deprived ; but the Communion of the Light, Love and Joys Divine it may be deprived of, as not being Essential to the Soul, but only unto God, who, after having offered them to its Acceptance, in order to its Perfection and Beatitude, leaves it free in the Exercise of its Faculties about them. So then all Spirits considered as derived from God enjoy these two sorts of Gifts, a Nature Divine, and also a Divine Light and Love ; tho' as they derive their Being and Estate from the Sovereign Origin, by the Mediation of inferior ones, many Events may happen to them. They cannot, as originated from inferior Origins, lose their Divine, Immortal Nature, because it is given absolutely, and without Condition : But the Light and Love Divine they may be deprived of, in case the second. Mediate Origins, by their Abuse of Liberty, fall into a State of Privation of them, since the Souls derived from them cannot naturally have any thing but by Means of these mediate Origins, from whom they derive their Being, and Natural Estate.

IV. These second Origins are of many Ranks, as first, the second Capital Origin, viz., the first Man, who produces many others, every of which is a new Origin. Every Creature produces its like in the different State which it freely chooses.

Principle

Chap. XV. Principle of an infinity of inferior ones; all which become again new Principles, *ad infinitum*. Now it is to be observed, that every of these, as it comes into Existence, is endued with Liberty of Conduct independent from the Rest, and hath Power to dispose it self in what Rank it will; and produce Creatures of its own Nature and Condition, till they arrive to a full use of Liberty, which when attained, they may change and vary their Estate, and produce new ones like themselves; and the thing produced must necessarily be of the same State and Nature as the Producent: This is a Rule without Exception, because the Effect hath nothing but from its Cause, which can Communicate only what it hath. But the Case does alter when the Effect is freed from all necessary Dependance on it, and is capable to Conduct it self.

V. Conclusions from these Principles; First, that all Men have received from God in Adam Light and Glory.

V. Now hence it follows, first, that every Man born into the World, as proceeding from the supreme Origin, hath received by the Creation of *Adam*, the second Capital Origin, the Light and Joy, and Love Divine; which Gift of God, had he and his Descendants preserved, all Men would now be born in a Holy, Luminous and Glorious Estate as *Adam* was.

VI Every Son of sinful Adam is necessarily a Sinner, void of the Light and Love of God.

VI. It follows, secondly, that when *Adam*, the second Capital Origin, by abuse of his Liberty and Faculties, was deprived of the Light and Love of God, his whole Posterity, born after the Event of Sin, are Originally Sinners, void of the Light and Love of God. Not that they have actually sinned, but Sinners they must be, as they come into Existence, because their Origin is such: As when a Person who admits Erroneous Principles, and draws Conclusions from them, these Conclusions must be Erroneous too: And tho' he do not draw them forth, yet it is certain, he can deduce nothing but Error from them; the same we may conclude of the false Principle, Man; if he is become all over Darknes and Corruption, every thing derived from him must be Corrupt and Dark.

VII. It



VII. It follows, thirdly, that if Man could recover the Light and Grace of God, and break all those evil Acts which he hath committed, by vertue of his Natural Powers and Use of his Liberty, all his Descendants would be by Origin Just and Holy; all those, I say, produced after his Re-establishment in God's Grace, would be Holy originally in vertue of their Root.

Chap. XV.  
VII. If Adam could re-establish himself by his Natural

*Powers, his Posterity would be originally Just and Holy.*

VIII. It follows fourthly, that if Man be impotent to redeem himself, and to recover the Light and Grace of God, as hath been shewed he is, his whole Posterity, considered as such, and without a Redeemer's Intervention, are Children of Sin, of Wrath, and of Damnation, and must be treated as such, without the Redeemer's Mediation; and therefore every Man, consider'd as a Son of Adam, is an Heir of Damnation.

VIII. Every Man, after the Fall of Adam, consider'd in himself, and without a Redeemer's

*Mediation is naturally Reprobate, and damn'd from the Womb.*

IX. It follows, fifthly, that if God do offer Pardon and Grace to Adam, he offers it, in him, to all that shall hereafter descend from him, in the same Measure, and on the same Condition, that he offers it to their Representative. For the Head-spring, and the Streams that may issue from it, are as yet but one, and a difference cannot, with Justice, be made between them: And God never Acts by partial Distinctions towards Subjects alike dispos'd; but invariably by Rule and Measure, by Order and Proportion, as I have \* elsewhere proved, which if he were disposed to break through, it would rather be to do good to his Creatures, than capriciously to restrain his Graces from them, as Men who Act themselves by Caprice, do ignorantly and injuriously impute to God.

IX. The renewed offer of the Grace of God, made to Adam, is made to his whole Posterity in him. \* Oecon. Creat. Ch. 5. 13.

X. If therefore God vouchsafe to renew the offer of Pardon, Grace and Light to the Representative of Mankind, and to continue the offer of it, due and Pardon which were tendered to Adam, are also tendered to us because we descend from him.

X. It follows, that that Grace

Chap. XV. ring the term of Life, on this Condition, that in order to enjoy it, he shall turn his Liberty and Faculties toward it; this same gracious offer is likewise made to all his Posterity, in him, during their term of Life: Nor needs a Man any other Assurance that God desires to be gracious to him, than that he is a Child of *Adam*: Not that *Adam* did ever merit or procure the renewed Offer of God's Grace: No, of himself he has procured only Sin and Death, and we as related to him, are only Heirs of Perdition. But God will be the Cause thereof; and in *Adam* he renews it to his Children, to try, if during Life they will Correspond therewith.

XI. If *Adam* corresponds with God's gracious Offer, or rejects it, all whom he represents are reputed to do so too.

XI. It follows, sixthly, that if *Adam* lay hold on God's gracious Offer, and correspond therewith, his Correspondence is imputed to his whole Posterity, as long as his Correspondence lasts, and they are in, and dependent on him; and till they come to use their Faculties freely, and ratifie or disannul what their Representative did in their behalf. But if the Origin refuse to correspond, the Descendants also are suppos'd to refuse, whilst they are in, and dependant on it, and incapable to use their Powers freely. For in this Estate, all that they have is by their Origin, and Admissive Cause, on which they as yet depend, and are united to. Graces are offer'd on the part of God, but they are ineffectual without free Admission, which themselves are unable, and their Representatives refuse to give. Here then it is proper to be remark'd as a Fundamental Principle that the Effect, as long as it is incomplete, incapable to subsist and act alone, depends on its producent Cause, or (being an effect of the same Nature,) as long as it is not like it. Whilst therefore the Productions of a free Cause, are incapable to act with Freedom, they depend upon, and are in the State and Element of their Cause; so that if this Cause fall into Sin and Misery, the effect is also involved with it, and therefore the Children of Parents aliened from God, are reputed as aliened from him, and out of his Grace. But when they arrive at the use of Reason, they have power during Life, freely to turn their Faculties towards

towards God, and to adhere unto, or depart from him. Chap XV.

XII. If Seventhly *Adam* had not sinned, and all, or some of his Descendants had committed Sin, the Sinners with their Descendants had been involved in the same perdition: So that these inferiour Origins had been a root of Curse and Evil to all that should have been propagated from them, as *Adam* was to all Mankind, and had God vouchsafed to resume them to his favour, their posterity would have been partakers of it as *Adam's* were, it being as hath been shewed an Unalterable Rule in Nature. That every thing do's reproduce itself with the same Realities as it possesses.

XII. If *Adam* had preserved his Innocence and a Descendant from him had committed Sin the posterity of this

*Inferiour Origin would have been involved in it, and have been rejected or resumed to Grace together with him.*

XIII. But when I say, that the Soul do's propagate itself with the same Realities, so that Children of Persons in the Light and Grace of God, inherit the Advantages of their Parents; I do not mean that the Light and Grace Divine are procreated by us: If a Creature exposed to the Sun produces another, it will, it is plain, enjoy the benefit of its Light, as well as the producent Cause; tho' it will owe it, not to its Cause, but to the immediate influence of the Sun: The Producent do's only Communicate Faculties disposed and ready to admit the Light, in Consequence whereof, it is illuminated by the Sun; while they who live in Dungeons, tho' the same Faculties are common to them, are not inlighten'd by it; because they are environed by Objects that stop the penetration of its Beams: It is therefore carefully to be remembered by us, that there belong to Spiritual and Corporeal Things Realities of two Sorts: One Absolute and Essential, as their Faculties; the other Perfective, as God, his illumination, and also Material Light and Order, which from Spiritual things outflow upon Corporeal: If now Both these Realities are possess'd by any Being, they that are generated by it will possess them likewise, tho' for Reasons Different. As a Productive Principle, and in virtue

XIII. In what Sense the Soul reproduces itself with the Divine Light.



**Chap. XV.** of its Faculties, whose Nature is To be, and To be fruitful, it will produce more Faculties, or a Being naturally tending towards, and capable of injoying its Perfective Object: This Object is not produced by it. No, it is God alone, who immediately illuminates, and Communicates himself to such as are disposed to receive him; in consequence of his Arbitrary Decree of communicating himself to such: Beings do therefore propagate unto others, such Things as are Essential to them: But their perfective and felicitizing Objects do come from God alone, and all that they can do, is to admit them: This Caution premised, I go on with the Conclusions.

**XIV They** XIV. Eighthly, All who descend from a Capital  
*who de-* Origin, by means of intermediate ones, between  
*scend* themselves and the Capital Source, participate in the  
*from Infe-* Goods or Evils of their Origin, in such Degrees of  
*rior Ori-* strength or weakness as they are transmitted by  
*gins by* them.  
*Succession*  
*partake of the most predominant Goods or Evils of their Predecessors.*

**XV. How** XV. If a head of a Family be wicked, his Children  
*Evil is* will inherit his Malignity and Evil habits; which, if  
*propagated and* when they come to the use of Reason, they do not  
*augmented from* oppose; but superadd depravations of their own,  
*Parents* they will become more wicked than their Fathers;  
*to their* and if they procreate Children, these will become  
*Children.* more degenerate than they; because to the Mass of  
their Predecessors vices inherited by them, they will  
superadd a weight of their own Iniquities, and be-  
come thereby incomparably more depraved: Whence  
it appears that Evils will increase, grow more Inve-  
terate and stubborn to be overcome by such as desire  
deliverance from them.

Thus, things, I say, will naturally go, because every thing, by its Original Nature, tends to dure, and to reproduce itself with the same Realities, Activity and Perfection, as it is possessed of: So that if a Subject naturally capable of a Thousand Degrees of Perfection, hath reduced itself to one hundred, it will produce another capable of a Thousand; but posses'd  
actually

actually only of a hundred, and if this lose a Moiety of its reality, its product will participate only of that Moiety that remains, and tho' the Descendants do not augment the iniquity of their Fathers by their own; yet the simple Duration, and Continuing in the same is sufficient to render 'em more hardened and incurable; because by Duration a Thing is strengthened and confirmed: And thus a Soul, whose desire and inclination, for good and perfective Objects, is weak, languid, and indifferent; but for Evil and depraving ones, is strong and violent, hardens and becomes almost unalterable in its state: *i. e.* if it do not grow better, it will infallibly grow worse, according to that proverbial Axiom, *Non progredi in virtute, est regredi.* Evil continued in, grows hard and inveterate by time, the Subject of it is naturally more disposed to repeat it, and repeating and Continuance hardens it more and more: For simple Continuance in Evil, in a free Subject, continually tends to strengthen and confirm that Evil, till it arrive to an Accomplish'd State: Even the Heathens were sensible of this.

*Damnosa quid non imminuit Dies!  
 Ætas Parentum peior avis, tulit  
 Nos Nequiores, mox daturos  
 Progeniem vitiosiore.*

XVI. Both Scripture and Experience do agree, that the Sins of Parents devolve on their posterity to the Third and Fourth Generation of them who have not loved God: *i. e.* If a Person do resolutely depart from God, the Children of such a one are born in a state of Enmity to him; so that if their Children are afterwards disposed to repent and turn to God, it will cost them more pains to overcome their sinful habits and inclinations. For tho' the Grace of God be given to them, they must do greater violence to themselves: Sin will be more ready to awake, their frailty will be greater, and the Rebellion of Nature, of Sense, of Passion, of Imagination, and Reason, will

Chap. XV. will be more obstinate in them than others: And tho' they receive Divine Assistance, they will have more powerful Enemies to encounter: The Rebellion of Nature is not so easily overcome, but is felt to the Third and Fourth Generation, in them whose unhappinels it is to descend from wicked Parents, tho' they return to God: But their Comfort is that by constant endeavour, and violence to themselves, by resisting continually the Enemies of their Salvation, and by Prayer to him, by whose Assistance we are only enabled to Fight and overcome, they may attain a Sovereign Degree of Grace and Virtue.

XVII.

*That the Sins of Adam, and of our immediate predecessors have different effects as to us: What these effects are.*

XVII. There is nevertheless this Difference between our Communion in the Sin of *Adam*, and of our immediate Parents, and their Progenitors, viz. that as *Adam* was by his Sin entirely deprived of God's gracious presence, who, after long patience, withdrew his Divine Light from him: So we, in quality of his Children, and partakers of his Sin, are wholly deprived of Light and Grace, left in a hopeless state, inheriting from him his vicious Inclinations only: Tho' these are not so great as are those of the depraved offspring of wicked Parents. But by our Communion in the Sins of our other Progenitors, and supposing God, according to the Fifth Conclusion, to have renewed the Offer of his Grace, Our Desires and Inclinations may be turned away from God, we may be full of Evil roots of vain and Sinful habits; but are not, during this mortal State, absolutely deprived of God's Gracious Light. *Adam* indeed stopt up the Spring of Heavenly Influences from himself and his Posterity; but since God hath pleased to open this spring again, no inferiour Origin, however depraved, can, (during this present Life,) deprive their Descendants of its refreshing Streams: They may indeed pervert their own, and their Childrens Desires, they may indispose them, and put obstacles in their way to hinder their admitting the Heavenly Influences. But Light will be ever present, and Grace be continually offered to them, it will draw them by infinite motives to come and to accept it: Nor can we be deprived of it by our Parents, as we were by *Adam's* Sin.

XVIII.



XVIII. Not that God dealt more severely with *Adam*, than he deals now with Men; having as seems imply'd, deprived him of his Grace all at once, where- as now he offers it a whole life together, tho' Men continue in their Sins: It is not so: God's General Conduct is ever uniform and alike: He did not presently withdraw his Grace from *Adam*, nor cease to shine in his Interiour; but long expected, long bore with patience, supporting graciously his Infirmities: During which time *Adam's* posterity was not cursed in him, and had he then procreated Children, they had not been excluded from the Grace of God: Then only did the Light cease to shine in respect of himself, and all who might descend from him, when the term prescribed by God was expired, and his Evils fully accomplish'd: So likewise since God was pleased to renew the offer of his Grace to *Adam*, and to all that should be propagated from him, during the term of Life, giving them, as it were a new course to run; it will not during this term be ever totally withdrawn from them; they may indeed forsake it, and unqualify themselves to receive it; but never be in an entirely hopeless state, till their Obduration is accomplish'd, and Life expired: Afterwards our state is so altogether hopeless, that could we procreate ourselves anew to infinity in the other World, our posterity would be Damned even from the Womb, without Recovery or hope: But, during this Life, our Case is different: God who, after having withdrawn his Grace when *Adam's* Sin was fully accomplish'd, hath pleased in infinite Mercy to fix a new Period to renew the offer of it: And the Conduct of God before and since the Sin of *Adam*, will appear uniform and Divinely equal to the Attentive Considerer of it.

XIX. What was before affirmed of Vicious Parents, is, by the rule of Contraries, to be affirmed of good and virtuous ones: Their virtue passes to their Children, and is inherent in them during their state of Dependance; but when they come to the use of Liberty, they are free to chuse their state: If they design to persevere in Piety, the principles whereof are implanted from their Birth, its ways will be infinitely

Chap. XV.  
XVIII. It  
do's not  
follow  
hence that  
God dealt  
more se-  
verely  
with A-  
dam than  
with his  
Posterity.

XIX. The  
Posterity  
of the Good  
partici-  
pate of the  
virtue and  
goodness  
of their  
Parents.

Chap. XV. easier unto them, than to the Unrighteous Off-spring, if such desire to return to Virtue: But if they chuse to depart from Virtue, Conscience will at first remorse them, give inward checks to their Inclinations and Desires; which if they refuse to hear, it will abandon them to the Courses they freely chuse.

XX.

Things  
farther  
proved  
and ex-  
plained.

\* Exod.

20. 6.

† Ro. 11.

16.

|| 1 Cor. 7

14.

\* Pl. 58.

4.

XX. All this is confirmed by the testimony of Experience and of Scripture, which assures us, \* *that God shews mercy to thousands in them that love him*; † *That if the root be holy, the branches are also holy, and if the first fruits be holy, that the Lump is also holy*; || *And that the Children of the Faithful are as truly holy*, \* *As the Children of the wicked are aliened from God, even from their Birth*: Not that the posterity of virtuous Persons are not cursed in *Adam*: But we ought not to consider them in him alone, since their Parents have admitted the Grace of God: Nor do's God consider them only as in *Adam*: No, they are in the Element of the Redeemer, the Second *Adam*, and are therefore more or less Holy, as the root or Branch that bears them, is more firmly grafted on him.

XXI. Dif-

ferent Va-  
riations  
in the  
state of  
the poste-  
rity both of  
Good and  
Bad. State  
of Chil-  
dren dy-  
ing before  
they come  
to the use  
of Liberty.

XXI. Now as in the Generation both of Good and Bad a thousand Changes happen: As Persons are sometimes more, and sometimes less in a state of Sin, or of the Grace of God; passing from a state of Salvation or Damnation to the opposite states: So their posterity, during the time of their Dependance, undergoes all these Changes with them: And hence their Hearts are filled more or less successively with the interior seeds of Vice and Virtue: hence also the same Persons have Children, some of a good and virtuous, others of a Depraved Disposition, according to the state in which their Parents were during their Procreation or Education; or when their Children were freed from Dependance on them: Now if these Children die before they come to the use of reason, and while their Parents are turned from God, they are lost, because they die without having admitted the Grace of God in their own, or the Persons of their Parents: But if their Parents are in the Grace of God, their Children are assuredly saved: They die in the Element of Jesus Christ to whom their root is joyned, nor need one fear on their account,

account, tho' they had died before they had been Born. Chap XV.

XXII. But as every Man is immediately derived from two Persons: If one be good and the other Evil, their Offspring will be a strange Medley of principles of virtue and of vice: They will be variable, and inconstant in their passions for, and inclinations towards Good and Evil, which is however preferable to a Posterity derived from Parents both in the Element of Sin: But since all are either in a state of Grace or of Damnation, during their dependance on their Parents: It must be determined by the strength of the Habits of Good or Evil predominant in their Parents: If virtue be more deeply rooted in one, than vice is in the other; if he adhere more strongly unto God, than the other adheres to the World or to Satan; if he be more devoted to the Will of God, than the other is to fulfil his own or the Devils; if his love and desire of God be more strong and ardent, than the others is of vain depraving Objects: In fine, if he Dedicate his Offspring more frequently and fervently to God, than the other do's to the World or the Devil; the state of the Child must be determined by him whose habit or disposition is most firmly rooted, and he lives and dies in a Good or Evil State, before he comes to the use of Reason, according as Principles of Good or Evil are most predominant in them. But when Persons come to a state of Liberty, they are freed from their Dependance and may change their state.

XXIII. I will add no more upon this Subject. They who shall understand what hath been said, will I doubt not, perceive that I have advanced nothing but what is deduced from certain and indubitable Principles: The Great thing to be observed is, that, all along, God, his Will, Decree, and Act are most pure and holy, contrary to the Event, Continuation and Increase of Sin; and that whatever happens it is most just on the parts both of God and Man: On the part of God, because he leaves Men so to be even as they Will: On the part of Man, because whatever befalls them, is from their own Choice: I add moreover, that to Will the Propagation and Increase of Sin is as contrary to the Divine Decree, as it is to

XXII.

*Estate of Children when one parent is Good the other Wicked.*

*That what hath been advanced do's very much illustrate the untaunted Purity of God and of his Decree.*



Chap. XVI Will its first Existence: And that if it happen, it will be always opposite to his Will; of which, Reality and Good are the only Objects.

But since however Evident Truth be in itself, there are seldom wanting some, who, from an uneasy scrupulous or conceited Mind, are forward to raise Objections: And because, upon this Subject, it may be pretended that the Communication of Original Sin cannot be supposed without Injustice, I shall once for all endeavour to satisfy their Objections and convince of the invalidity of them.

## CH A P. XVI.

### *Certain Objections and Difficulties against Original Sin: And a Solution of them.*

I. A Summary of  
Certain  
Objections  
against Original  
Sin.



REASON being blind, depraved, and proud, is never wanting to form Objections against Original Sin, and the Communication of it.

1. To represent it as a Chimerical Notion, it urges first, that nothing cannot be propagated; and therefore Sin cannot.

2. Secondly, that God forbids all Men committing Sin; but no where forbids Original Sin.

3. Thirdly, That tho'tis a Duty to pray for Pardon of our Sins, there is no Example of any who ever prayed for Pardon of the Sin by him committed in *Adam*, or that *Adam* committed, when his posterity was yet unborn; and therefore Sin is not communicated by propagation.

4. Fourthly, That the Scripture as well as Common Sense assures us, that *The Child shall not bear the iniquity of the Father.*

5. Fifthly, That if the Communication of the Father's Sin to his Descendants were Natural and Infallible, God might easily have prevented it by constituting

tuting another head over Mankind; or by causing them to be Born independent of one another, as it is commonly held, the Angels were, who were none of them punish'd, except for their own Sins, whereas Men, who we pretend were more signally favoured with the Love of God, would in reality come short of the Advantage the Angels had, if we suppose them to be damned for a Sin committed before they were in Being.

6. Sixthly, If Men ought to be Born of one another, what reason is there to make the Liberty and Lot of an unborn posterity dependent on a Father's Fancy?

7. Seventhly. Why did not God rather take it into his own Hands?

8. Lastly, It is said, that if this be the state of things, it had been better if God had not endued Man with the Power of Procreation, and left his posterity in nothing.

II. Now to answer these Difficulties in their Order; II. *An* I observe that the first is founded upon this Principle. *Answer to* That to be Communicative is a Property of Being, or *these Dif-* of Reality: But Sin is not of a Real, or Positive Na- *faculties,* ture; and therefore not Communicable. Enough *tho' Sin* hath been said \* already to answer this Sophism. *be not of a* Sin, I acknowledge, is not communicated in a posi- *Real Na-* tive, real manner, but by Privation only: *nature, it is* *Communi-* *cable. The* *manner of* *its Com-* *munica-* *tion.* *tion.* Soul, or faculties deprived of the perfections belonging to them, can reproduce themselves with only that Reality or Perfection which is remaining to them, and not with that which they are deprived of: And it is thus that Sin is communicated.

\* See Ch. 2. 4. Acts 5. 6, 7. Ch. 15. 14.

III. The second Objection, that God do's not for- III. *That* bid Original Sin, and therefore it is not Sin, is I ob- *God hath* serve Ambiguous, and capable of two Senses. In one *forbid O-* Sense 'tis false, in the other foolish and unreasonable. *iginal* It is false that God do's not forbid Original Sin, so as *Sin, as it* it can be forbidden: It can, I observe, be commit- *could be* ted only by and in the Origin; and consequently *forbidden;* can only be forbidden in it: And here it is plain God *and it is* *absurd to* *press this Difficulty further.* *do's*

**Chap. XVI** do's and hath forbidden it. When he charges the first Man not to Sin, what else is this but to forbid him to defile himself and his posterity by it? When he tells him that Death would certainly be the Effect of Sin: What else is this, but to forbid him, and his posterity sinning on pain of Death? Hereby God forbids the root of Mankind polluting himself with Sin, and how often in Scripture do's he command the practice of virtue, and abstaining from Sin, in Consideration of Posterity that the Father's obedience may derive a Blessing on it? But if by this Objection we mean that God never forbad the Children, the Sins committed by their Father, it is too foolish to enter the thoughts of an intelligent Person: How absurd is it to suppose any thing to be thus forbid to Children, before they are existent, and consequently not capable of acting? It is plain the Parent, who is actually existing, is only capable of this Prohibition: If the Children had been capable of it, they must have existed before Sin was committed, which is contrary to the Common Hypothesis, in which Posterity is considered as after its Event.

**IV. That** IV. Thirdly, They who pretend that Men are not  
*the third* wont to ask pardon of Original Sin, or the depraved  
*Objection,* Nature derived from their Parents: And that it  
*viz. that* brings no burden upon Conscience, do make an abo-  
*we do not* minable Confession, which instead of concluding it  
*pray for* not to be a Sin, concludes it to be one of a Nature so  
*Pardon of* darkening and depraving, that their Conscience is  
*Original* made dead, and hard, past sense or feeling by it:  
*Sin is* Would Men but own with Humility and Contrition,  
*false, and* that without the Redeemers Grace they are undone in  
*argues a* their very Source; that even from their Birth they  
*blind,* are a vile Collection of iniquity derived from their  
*hard, and* Parents, it would be a means to weaken the power of  
*a proud* Depraved Nature. How frequently do the Saints in  
*Heart.* their intercessions for themselves and others, pray for  
\* Pf. 79. pardon of their Parents, and their Predecessors Sins:  
8. Acknowledging themselves laden with the burden of  
Pf. 106. them: As \* David, † Daniel, † Esdras, \* and Ne-  
6, 7. hemiah? How oft do the Scriptures reproach the  
† Dan. 9. v. 8. 26. Eld. 9. v. 7. \* Nehem. 9. v. 16, 34, 36.

Children



Children with their Parents Vices? Hence it is they Chap. XVI  
 call 'em a wicked and Adulterous Race, an Evil Gene-  
 ration, a Seed of Vipers, Children of Murderers, of  
 the Prophets, and of the wicked one: And hence the  
 Punishment of the Fathers is often transmitted to the  
 Children: Hence *David* praying for Pardon of his  
 Sins makes his Confession thus, \* *I was shapen in ini-* \* Pf. 51:  
*quity, and in Sin did my Mother conceive me.* In fine, 7.  
 they who followed only the Remains of Natural  
 Truth, have lighted upon this Truth. Witness an  
 † English Author, who proceeds on Natural Princi- † Herbert  
 ples, and after having spoke of the Evil Inclinations de veritate.  
 Natural to us, without discovering the Cause thereof,  
 he Concludes, *Occulta Dei iudicia subesse existimaveris,*  
*Lector, & in labem istam Originalem haud immerito*  
*animadverti:* That there lie concealed under it the  
 secret Judgments of God; and that it is not without  
 cause that Men reflect on their Original Pravity, and  
 advises, *Hiscæ igitur tentati noxis, iram Divinam*  
*deprecentur:* Let such as are tempted by these Evils  
 seek to appease God's Anger by their Prayers: And a  
 mere Pagan tells us no body is Born without Vicious  
 Inclinations. *Nemo nascitur sine vitiis:* I produce these  
 Authorities in opposition to a Difficulty supported only  
 by the weak Authority or Allegation of a few Blind,  
 Proud, and Hardened Men, who if they would lay  
 aside their Mask, and propose their Objection fairly,  
 their Argument against Original Sin would be, that,  
 because the Devil whose operations, in the Element of  
 Evil, are strong and powerful, finding their hearts  
 fill'd with Sin even from the Womb, hath rendred  
 them insensible thereto, and perswaded 'em that the  
 Notion of it is a mere Chimera, it follows that it is  
 only a Chimera.

V. But Scripture and Reason (some do object) as- V. Per-  
 firm that the Child do's not bear the iniquity of the sons Adult  
 Father: That the Soul that Sinneth, it should die; do not  
 and that every one shall bear the Punishment of his bear the  
 Sins. I answer, it is so, when Father and Child are iniquity  
 separate from each other, and independent in their of their  
 Conduct; and of such it is manifest, that God by the Parents,  
 but the  
*Non Adult are reckoned as one person with them, and do bear it.*  
 Prophet

**Chap. XVI** Prophet speaks, who bear each others Sins, no further than they actually participate in them: But neither Nature, Reason, Experience, nor Scripture say, that Unborn Posterity, who as yet are contained in their Predecessors do not participate in their Lot and Disposition; but rather they bear witness to it. Nature, it teaches that every thing is like in Nature, to its root, and that while it is not divided from, it is of the same nature with it: Reason, it teaches that an Effect cannot exceed the Reality of its Cause, and we need only open our eyes to be convinced what Experience and Scripture say. If a Father be in Servitude, Want, or Inconvenience, his Posterity will be Born in his Circumstances and Condition: The Nature of the Father is so conditioned, and the Child do's only redouble the Fathers Nature.

*VI. That this state of things is very natural to be conceived: If the Child be not to blame, much less is God.*

VI. But it will be said, the Child can help none of this. It is not in his Choice to be derived from Good or Evil Parents: I answer, the same is to be affirmed of God: That all Men were not Holy, Just, and Happy, and produced a righteous off-spring, is not to be imputed unto him. God cannot oblige 'em to be such against their Will, because he cannot destroy his Work, viz. the Liberty of Man, by virtue of which Man, after his fall, is free either not to produce any Creatures, or to produce a posterity vicious, and depraved, like himself: Man is not compell'd to reproduce himself, nor ought we to complain of God, if Man exercise this Power and reproduce his Being such as it really is: If Posterity will complain, let it be of their immediate Origin, yea let them curse it, if they please; because it deserves no better; but let them beware of reflecting upon God.

*VII. If the Creating mankind independent of one ano-*

VII. But why, it may be objected Fifthly, did not God vouchsafe so to order things that these unhappy Consequences might have been prevented? Had he created all mankind in a Separate Existence, independent of each other, the Sin of one would not have depraved another.

*ther would have preserved them from Original Sin: That this Objection is rash and a separate Creation would have exposed them to a greater and more certain fall.*

Now to this Objection I answer first. That it is *Chap. XVI*  
 Extravagant and Unreasonable, for, since all things  
 were created and established by God in a good Estate,  
 and endued with power to persevere therein, it is  
 not just to censure his Establishment on account of  
 Evil Consequences brought on by a Rebellious Prin-  
 ciple, *viz.* by the Will of Man: Good Men do ne-  
 ver carry their complaints beyond the Second Origin,  
 without censuring God. *Q* Adam, (*said Esdras*) *what*  
*hast thou done; for though it was thou that sinned'st,*  
*thou art not fallen alone, but we all who come from thee:*  
 He do's not say, why hath God ordained that we  
 should come from thee? Why hath he not created us  
 apart?

I answer in the Second place, that things were thus  
 disposed for the better, when God had tryed the  
 way of Independance. For so the Angels were crea-  
 ted, and notwithstanding fell; and so much the more  
 dangerously, in that every Man actually concurred to  
 it: Hence they could not return to that Light and  
 Grace, which they had knowingly, and in themselves  
 rejected. This God indeavoured to the utmost to  
 prevent, and the fall of Man's Posterity being only by  
 their Representative, it was to be sure no inconside-  
 rable Motive to him to regard them with an eye of  
 Pity; to renew, to every individual, the offer of his  
 Grace, and try if renouncing what their Origin had  
 done they would embrace it. If it be said that the  
 Angels fell because they were made Subject to one an-  
 other, and that Men might not have fallen, had they  
 been created free and Independent from all Subjection  
 to each other. I answer, it is very absurd for these  
 Advocates of Pride, so far to indulge their fan-  
 sie, as, in favour of it, to wish every thing had been in trouble  
 and disorder, and that the bonds of mutual Love and  
 Charity were broken by a Confusion that would have  
 given greater advantage to Sin, to Self adhesion, in-  
 difference, and contempt of others: The Prince of  
 the Devils was Subject unto none, and yet he fell more  
 deeply than the rest: But why don't they, to make  
 sure work of it, wish to be naturally and absolutely  
 independant of God himself. Let this Contradictory  
 Impious



**Chap. XVI** Impious Supposition be made, and Man is strait in an incapacity of sinning ; but if it be not lawful for Man to affect an independency, why then will any censure the Order establish'd by God in Nature for the Procreation of Mankind ? an Order graciously contriv'd to prevent Man's falling (in case he fell) so desperately as the Devils ; the Method of Procreation being most proper, not only to prevent their so terrible Fall ; but, in case they should Fall, to capacitate them for Mercy, and invite God's Grace and Pity ; all which are signs of a Charitable Care in God ; but I will speak more of this when I come to the sixth Objection.

**VIII.** If *Original Sin would have been prevented by leaving Adam in his Sin, and creating a new Head of Mankind; that this Expectant is inconsistent with the Divine Nature, and ways of acting, and hurtful to Men.* **VIII.** They who pretend, that Men had been preserved from Original Sin, if God had pleased to create, in the room of *Adam*, another Head of Mankind, do make a very absurd Complaint : For, I ask, would this new Head have been Impeccable ? This cannot be said : Supposing then that he had fallen, must God continually change his Works, and annihilate his Immutable Decrees ? Must he accommodate his constant, unchangeable Ways of Acting to our Fancies ; or to prevent our unreasonable Complaints ? Be it consider'd, that this way of Acting would have been an altering the Divine Designs, and a Retraction of his Act, and ways of Acting : *Adam* was created to be their Head and Origin ; and must God retract or disavow his first Design ? Must he destroy the most Divine and Admirable of all the Powers of external Nature ; a Power by which the Creation is lively Represented ? Or would we have *Adam*, and all the Race which he might have procreated, been abandon'd by God, to raise up a Holy Seed by another Origin ? Was it not a greater Charity in God to draw his Holy Seed from *Adam*, and his Posterity subjected to Damnation, by offering all fitting Means to rescue them from Perdition, so as it should be only their own fault if they were not re-establish'd and sav'd ? But when Liberty resolves on Evil, nothing can hinder its Event, in whatever Order things are disposed. Let Men attentively consider their Nature, as disposed by

by God, and they must acknowledge, with wonder, Chap. XVI  
 that nothing could be contrived better, and more  
 conducing to the Interest and Happiness of Mankind,  
 and that all contrary Appearances are false, support-  
 ed only by our Ignorance, in which number the fol-  
 lowing Objections may be rank'd:

IX. Tho' Men are born of one another, yet why  
 is the Lot of Posterity, and Liberty of Children, IX. *Why*  
 before they arrive at the use of Reason, intrusted *the Lot of*  
 to their Parents; since hereby they are made to *Posterity*  
 participate in their Guilt without being guilty! *before the*  
*use of Reason,* is dependent on the Parents; that this Establishment was ordained  
 during Man's Perfection, and to propagate Perfections, without any re-  
 gard to Nothing, or to Sin.

This Difficulty comes from Ignorance; for, First,  
 We must observe, that the present state of Disorder  
 and Privation visible in Nature was not establish'd  
 by God: All things were by him created in a most  
 perfect Manner; and therefore nothing could be con-  
 trived better than to commit the Lot and Disposition  
 of Posterity to a Being that was Perfect in all re-  
 spects, and full of Divine Realities, as Man was.  
 Secondly, It is to be noted, that the Divine Estab-  
 lishment did in its Design respect Realities only,  
 and not Sin or Privation. Propagation was not or-  
 dained to communicate Imperfections, but Realities,  
 and to increase their Strength and Dominion among  
 Men: What was before observed concerning Liberty,  
 is applicable here: God did not give it, because he  
 had Privation in view, that Man should make it the  
 subject of Abuse, but that he should embrace Realities  
 by it in a more unlimited manner, and be more  
 confirmed in them. Even so, when God desired to  
 increase the Perfections of his Creatures, his Wis-  
 dom contrived the way of Propagation, by their  
 mutual Dependence on one another; a Work of Di-  
 vine Wisdom and Goodness, which few comprehend  
 the admirable Beauty and Perfection of.

X. But to Illustrate these things by more parti- X. *That*  
*the way of Propagation and Dependence was a most Excellent Means of*  
*Perfection unto Men from their Birth, and to preserve them from a Fall.*  
*How the Divine Wisdom and Goodness do appear most admirable in it.*  
 cular

**Chap. XVI**cular Reflections ; when God was pleased to create Free and Intelligent Beings, they were, as hath been demonstrated above, necessarily of a Frail and Labile Nature ; because when they began to Exist, they had no confirmed Habits of Vertue, a Habit being acquirable only by repeated Acts : Whereas when Creatures begin to be, they never acted, and are then but weak in the ways of Vertue ; and hence it was that Liberty was betrayed. This was the Lot of a World of Angels, in whose room, when God vouchsaf'd to place other Creatures, he graciously consider'd what way was best to make 'em from their Origin habitually inclined to Good, that being born with this strong Bent for Vertue, they might not be drawn away : Hereupon he resolved on this Expedient, *viz.* that if all Creatures then-after to be produced, descended from a Stock habitually Good, they would be born with a habit of Perfection equal to that of their Origin, *i. e.* be habitually confirmed in it ; and that the second Origins being originally inclined to Good, strengthening their good Habits, and confirming themselves therein, the succeeding Generations would always be originally more strong, confirmed, more rooted and unshaken in the Continuance and Increase of Vertue, than their Fathers ; by which means Mankind, in about five or six Ages, would have been confirmed past danger of a Lapse, by a certain and methodical Improvement in Vertue ; they would have been born in a more perfect State than Angels were created, who at their first Existence had no habit of Vertue and Perfection, and could attain 'em only on the Foot of their first Estate ; whereas Man being originally endued with the Perfections of his Source would have improv'd on the foot of his Origin's augmented State, and the continual redoubling of it, both in themselves, and the Creatures produced by them, whose Perfection would have increas'd on the Foot of that of their immediate Source ; and thus we see what an admirable Advantage Procreation would have been, had the Design of God been followed in it. Who can conceive a Love and Goodness more admirable than that



of God? Who can imagine a greater and more Pa- Chap. XVI  
ternal Concern and Love than appears in this Dis-  
position. Wo be to them who instead of admiring  
the infinite Riches of God's Goodness, say to him,  
Why hast thou made me thus?

XI. Nevertheless, to accomplish this Charitable De- XI. That  
sign of God, it was requisite Man should be born in Adam  
the common Lot, without an habitual Constancy; *could not*  
the contrary is absurd to be conceived, since to sup- *be created*  
pose him habitually firm, is to suppose him to have *habitually*  
acted before he did Exist. He was indeed created *just and*  
in a good and perfect State, tho' not habitually so; *Holy; but*  
and God was besides so careful of him, gave him so *it was*  
many Precautions, condescending even to converse *easie for*  
with him in a Corporeal Form, that nothing could *him to be-*  
be contrived more powerfully to ingage him to be- *come so.*  
come habitually such; and therefore if Man hath not  
corresponded as was easie for him, he can only blame  
himself, and his depraved Will which hath changed  
to a Source of Misery to him, that which was design'd  
to be a Source of all sort of Blessings. God had no  
prospect of Man's Disobedience in ordaining Propa-  
gation, he was only concerned to shew his Love to  
him, and desire of his Happiness; and tho' by the  
Fall of Angels he had the Idea of Sin; yet he did  
not foresee it as of an infallible Event, but as easily  
avoidable by the Care of Man, and the Divine As-  
sistance which never fail'd.

XII. Now as the excellent Usefulness of Propaga- XII. Why  
tion to confirm and accomplish the Happiness and *the Lot of*  
Perfection of Mankind, was the reason of its Ordi- *Children*  
nation; so likewise was it of putting the Childrens *depends on*  
Lot in the Parents Hands, till they have attained *their Pa-*  
the use of Reason. Had Men continued in their *rents.*  
Original State, increasing in Perfection, according to  
the Divine Establishment, Children would hence have  
inherited a proportionable Perfection; and if the State  
of things is altered, we ought to impute it wholly unto  
God, and not to the Decree or Design of God.

XIII. One thing there is does well deserve to be XIII. The  
remark'd by us, viz. that it is not from any parti- *Depen-*  
dence of the Childrens Estate upon their Parents, is a natural *and neces-*  
sary Consequence of Propagation, *sary,*

## Chap. XVI

cular, positive Decree of God, ordained after Propagation, that the Lot and Liberty of Posterity is reckon'd in their Predecessors. We must not imagine, that God did first Decree, that Man should be born of one another; and that being then indifferent to appoint that the Lot of Posterity should depend, or not, upon their Parents, before the use of Reason, he ordained it in pure good Pleasure. If God were thus indifferent in it, one might inquire, Why he hath thus disposed things? But this is not the Case. On the contrary, supposing God to have ordained the Propagation of Men for the Reasons already mentioned: the natural and immediate Consequence is (without the Intervention of a new Decree) that the Lot and Liberty of Posterity shall be included in their Predecessors, till they come to the use of Reason; and to ask why they are thus dependent, is in effect to ask, Why their Production is dependent on them? or, why they are propagated from them? As long as an Effect is in its Cause it makes one same Whole or Compound with it; and till its Generation be so Completed, as to be like its Cause, it is still in it; and dependent on it: Nor does it become Free and Independent, but in proportion as it hath Power to use the Faculties and Functions essential to its Nature, and by which the natural Subsistence of its Cause is perfected: So that if it be not free to conduct it self, it abides still in its Cause.

## XIV.

*How the Liberty of Children is included in their Parents. Right of Education, its Foundation.*

XIV. Not that the Liberty of the Child, for several Years together, after he is born, is more or less contained in the Parents, from whom it flows, as it were, into the Child, when he comes to riper Years; but because the Body and Soul of a new born Child, are first produc'd in so weak and imperfect a State, that for many Years they are unable to subsist without the Parents continual Care and Assistance; during which time the Subject is imperfect, and naturally pertains to its Cause, which is obliged to be careful of it, as of it self: On this is founded the Parents Right of Education; which is not a Duty of a positive and dispensible Nature; nor such as does only respect the Body; but is a Duty of a natural and indispensable

dispensable Obligation, whose principal Object is the Soul: So then the Lot and Estate of Children is committed to their Parents, not as a thing naturally alien, and different from them, and which from this State of Alienation is intrusted to them; it is indeed different from them when they come to use their Faculties, but till then it is a part of themselves, hanging upon them as Fruit upon a Tree, and nourish'd by the Sap which is conveyed by it.

XV. And to whom, I would freely ask, would we have the State of Children committed before the use of Reason. It can be only to himself, his Parents, or other Persons: It cannot be to himself, being as yet incapable of Knowledge to conduct himself. Nor have others any natural Right thereto; nor can they with Justice rob the Parents of the Right which Nature gives them.

XVI. But why, it may be ask'd; does not God rather take the Childrens Lot into his own Hands, than leave it to their Parents? I answer, since he hath given absolute Gifts to Man, he will never deprive him of them, unless he freely resign them to his Direction. If therefore Persons offer their Children to him in Sincerity and Truth, and are themselves truly resigned to him, he then receives them, and takes the Charge and Direction of them into his own Hands, and here all is well. But if they discontinue this Resignation of themselves and Children, they return to the Element of Adam, and are involved together in Perdition, because it is an unalterable Truth, that God will never communicate his Graces unto Man, but as Man does freely resign himself to God, and corresponds with his Operations: I am not ignorant that Men flatter themselves with the use of Ceremonies and Sacraments. But their Hopes will at last deceive them; they are, I own, useful to confirm the Faith, and good Estate of such as take occasion by them to abandon themselves to God; in Consequence whereof Grace is augmented, and Faith confirmed both to themselves and Children; but wicked, vain, and worldly Souls their Hearts are hardened; and their Posterity cursed by the sacrilegious abuse

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XV. The Estate of Children can be intrusted to none besides their Parents.

XVI. God is the Trustee of the State and Liberty of Children, when their Parents sincerely resign them to him; then they are safe, but otherwise are in danger; nor can Baptism change the Fund of these Estates.



Chap. XVI of Holy Sacraments, *i. e.* by receiving them without a Love of God : Sacraments, and even God himself, with all his Graces, are Light and Holiness to the Good, but Darkness and Death unto the Wicked : The first are profited, but the second, by their own Indisposition, are hurt by them : The Bee draws Honey, and the Spider Poyson from them. We must, with a sincere Heart and pure Intention, resign our selves to God, otherwise we remain in a wicked State, and Enemies of God, both great and little, Parent and Child, notwithstanding any Ceremonies whatever.

## XVII.

*There is no reason why God should destroy the Power of Procreation, in favour of the Wicked : If Children are Culpable in their Parents, God's Grace is also offered to them, and so there is a perfect Equality on both sides.*

XVII. It will be further said, and it is the last remaining Difficulty, that the Child who can help nothing, may justly complain of his Parents for his Misery ; that good were it for him not to have been born, and why hath God endued the Wicked with a Power of Procreation ? I answer, if Children have reason of Complaint, it is not of God, but of their immediate Origins. God gave to Man a power of Procreation when he was originally in a pure and holy State. This Power in its self is very good and wonderful ; it is given absolutely, and to a good End, and the Conduct of it is committed to the Liberty of Man ; and when Man becomes wicked, would we have God to change or destroy the Immortal Works of his Power and Goodness in favour of a rebellious Brood, that no sooner comes to the use of Reason, but it will exceed its Origin in Perverseness ? This can't be done, nor is it conceivable ; because what is absolutely given by God can't be retracted or destroyed ; and I add, that God expects with Patience the Conversion of Children in their Parents, waiting to have Mercy on them, so that his ways herein are perfectly Just and Equal. But good Men do sometimes carry their Scruples relating to God's Goodness, too far ; some would have his most precious Graces communicated, if not to Devils, yet to impure and unholy Souls, that no Evil may happen to them. It is to be indiscreetly zealous, and to carry the Love of God beyond due Bounds ; to such, that answer which heretofore God gave to \* *Esdra*s, who was in pain to see so many Evils happen, notwithstanding the im-

mensity

ment of God's Love is very applicable, thou comest very short; that thou shouldst be able to love any Creatures more than I; but I have oft-times drawn nigh unto thee, and to it, but never to the Unrighteous.

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XVII.

C H A P. XVII.

A Continuation of Objections against Original Sin, with their Solutions.

I.



Have gone over the principal Difficulties relating to Original Sin. Not that all of them were ever urged against it; but because the Principles I have laid down seem liable to them, I have taken notice of them; there are besides a great

*I. Other less considerable Objections against Original Sin; the three first.*

many others proposed upon this Subject, which I have taken no notice of, as appearing to me too inconsiderable to embarrass the Minds of any that can penetrate into solid Truth. But that I be not thought either to conceal, or fear any Objection that can be made against it. I proceed to the most considerable of such as are still behind.

1. It is objected first, \* that all Sin ought to be committed with Freedom, and with Knowledge, and this they attempt to prove by all those Passages of Scripture wherein it is said, that Children are *without Knowledge, that they cannot discern Good from Evil.* \* See Le Clerk's Entretien de Theologie, Dial. 4, especially page 145, 189, 198.

2. They object, secondly, against it; † those Texts † of Scripture which say, that Children do neither Good nor Evil, that they have no Malice, and the like, and where little Children are propos'd as a Model of Conversion. † See Le Clerk's *Epist. 6. p. 162, 166.*

3. In the third place, 'tis objected, ‡ that one can't ‡ maintain, that Children merit everlasting Punishments, and that dying in their natural State, they are subjected to them, without imputing Cruelty to God.

These three Objections, or rather Classes of Objections

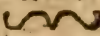
Chap. objections are usually made against the Doctrine of  
XVII. Original Sin, which I will endeavour to answer before I inquire if there are any others.

II. The  
two first  
Classes of  
Objections  
taken  
from the  
Considera-  
tion of the  
State of  
Children,  
refuted.

II. Now these three Classes of Objections are so weak, that it is a matter of just surprize to see Persons of Sense and Judgment embarrass'd by them: The first, which supposes all Sin to be committed with Knowledge and the Will, is true, if applied to Actual Sin; but ridiculously false, if applied to Original Sin, or the Defects of our Birth. If Man was free to chuse whether he would be born or not, or in a more or less perfect State, one could not then be originally impure, without an antecedent Liberty and Knowledge: But this Supposition being ridiculous, it is no less so to require a Liberty and Knowledge antecedent to all faultiness. The first Passages of Scripture have reference only to Sins committed by Choice and Liberty, and the affirming, that Children do not commit any Actual Sin, that being without, and incapable of Law, they cannot violate it, nor consequently commit any known or voluntary Sin, is nothing to Original Sin. Nor do those Passages mentioned in the second Class, in which little Children are proposed to us as a Model of our Conversion, intend to inculcate, that they are Pure and Innocent before God, as if the Scripture Comparisons were to be taken in their strictest Sense: This way of reasoning is as if, from that saying of Christ *I send you forth as Sheep among Wolves*, one would infer that his Disciples should go upon all four into the Desarts among Savage Beasts: We must not imagine that our Lord's Design in this Comparison was to inculcate, that Children are born in a pure and holy State; but that as little Children when born into this sinful World in a miserable and corrupt Estate, do in regard of Worldly Things demean themselves in a simple, obedient Manner, are void of Prejudice and of Malice, and submit themselves to be taught, govern'd, educated, dressed, managed and disposed wholly according to their Nurses or Mothers Pleasure; so they who enter into the Oeconomy of the Spiritual World, by a Regeneracy or new



new Birth, ought, at their entring into this new World, to demean themselves after the same obedient, simple, inoffensive, unprejudic'd Manner, in reference to things Divine, submitting themselves wholly to the Government and Manuaction of God's Holy Spirit, without Prejudice, Fraud, Presumption, or any Fondness or Adhesion to ones own Ways or Wisdom. It is ridiculous to make any other Inference from our Lord's comparing the Disposition of him who desires to enter into the New World, or Heavenly Kingdom with the Estate of Children, and to conclude, that they are not Originally Sinners. He who desires to see Passages of this Nature explain'd in an ample, lively and admirable Manner, may consult the Book referr'd to in the \* Margin.

Clap. XVII.  
  
\* Renun-  
ciation of  
the Evan-  
gelic Spi-  
rit, by Mrs.  
Bourig-  
non, Part.  
2. Art.  
168, &c.

III. But the Objection of the pretended Cruelty of punishing Children with Eternal Torments, is the most absurd of all. For, not to dispute about these Torments, I take no notice that two things (both like false) are supposed in this Objection: First, that Children are Sinners by the way of Positive Imputation, God imputing to them their Parents Sin, without which Imputation they had not been Sinners, nor liable to Eternal Death. Secondly, It supposes a false Idea of God's Justice, far different from that proposed elsewhere by me. It is, I say, falsely suppos'd, that God does punish Children so as positively to inflict eternal Punishments on them, this were as Cruel as Imputation itself. But we need not have recourse to these Chimeras to comprehend Original Sin, and the eternal Misery of Man damn'd from his Birth, except God's infinite Mercy vouchsafe to interpose. What I affirm upon this Subject is, that Man, who, by his own default fell into a Privation of the Realities and Perfections, he was originally endued with, could by natural Generation reproduce himself only such as he really was, *i. e.* deficient in his original Perfections; and further, that Man reproduced in this imperfect State, void of the Source of Good, was necessarily involved in Misery and Trouble, not by any positive Act of God, but because in consequence of Sin he is naturally stript of his Original

III. A Re-  
futation of  
the third  
Objection,  
viz. That  
the Do-  
ctrine of  
Original  
Sin im-  
putes Cru-  
elty to  
God; that  
this  
Objection  
is the  
most ab-  
surd of  
any.

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Perfection ; and because to complete his Misery, God needs only to leave him as he is, in the Privation of the Source of Good, in which he is born, a Privation, that in its Formality is the greatest of all Miseries, and must necessarily be very sensible in a living Subject endued with a Capacity of infinite Delights and Joys. Are not these Consequences Necessary and Natural ? Is God at all concerned in them ? Have we any reason to complain that he is Cruel ? If Man, ingrate as he is, be left in the State he chuses ; if he reproduce himself void of the Source of Happiness, what pretence is there to impute Cruelty to God ? Is it not most Just and Equitable, that it should be so with Man ? By what rule of Equity can a Man, deprived of a thousand Advantages, with which he was endued by God, generate Beings more perfect than himself. Can we justify the complaints of any Creature, who being born impure, instead of humbling himself in the sight of God, and imploring his Gracious Aid, upbraids him insolently with being Cruel, him who hath not contributed to his Misery, and does only leave him to himself. Would we have God make Laws that are impossible and absurd to avoid the Imputation of Cruelty from those blinded, proud Spirits, who refuse to acknowledge their original Depravation, and the necessity they are in of God's Gracious Aid. Would we have him ordain, that a Cause involved in Misery and Sin should produce Effects, perfect, pure and happy, that Nothing or Privation should be a Source of, or be more perfect than Reality it self. He must have a mind strangely formed indeed, who does not comprehend these Truths, or acknowledge them when comprehended.

IV. The  
Fourth Ob-  
jection in-  
ferr'd  
from cer-  
tain Texts  
of Scrip-  
ture. An  
Answer  
to them.

IV. But there are other Objections still behind, one of which is boasted to be Demonstrative in favour of the confuted Pelagian Heresie. It is, say some, an uncontested Truth, that the Scriptures cannot lyē. Now in them we are assur'd in a hundred Places, that God will render to every Man according to his Works ; and that every Man shall bear his own burden ; and how can this be reconciled to Original Sin, particularly with that Assertion, that Children

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Children Born of wicked Parents, dying in an infant State, shall never be admitted to the Divine enjoyment, but be punish'd with Damnation? Is this to render to every Man according to his Works? To treat Creatures thus, who are allowed never to have committed actual Sin. I answer, is this the boasted Demonstration to destroy Original Sin out of the World? It is Blindness not to see that passages of this Nature are only Declarations how God will deal with them who have actually done Good or Evil Works: But have no relation to the Question. How God will deal with them who through a Natural and Invincible Impotence have done neither Good nor Evil as is the Case of Children sprung, some from a Good, others from an Evil Stock, they will no doubt be treated by God most justly; but since they have done no works, That Rule of rendering to every one according to his works cannot respect them.

V. Let it be then supposed, or asserted rather that Children will be Rendred to according to their Works: How may we conceive their Disposition or Lot will be: Why this seems to me to come nearest to this rule: Children have done no Works, Equity do's therefore seem to require they should be treated according to the Works of the Root that bears them, and of which they are a part. Suppose a plant that never bore was to be treated according to the Quality of its fruit; the foremention'd rule seems to require it should be treated as its Stock or root, whose principles are in it: So that in virtue of this rule God may save the Children of the just, and superadd what happiness he pleases from his overflowing Grace and Love: And the wicked plants he may abandon to perdition, as their Parents: I do not say that God inflicts positive Punishments on them, nor that their suffering ought to be equal to theirs who have actually sinned, and rejected the Grace of God. Perhaps when he leaves them in the privation of his blessed joys, he may lay their Faculties in a Slumber, to be in a kind of indolent State. God's Power and Wisdom can find out infinite ways to treat them as Persons separate from him, without any Impeachment of his Equity and Love:



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Love: But this is his Concern, which therefore let us leave to him, and not think ourselves less worthy to be separated from him on account first of Sinful Adam, considered before his Readmission to God's Grace: Nor Secondly of our immediate parents, since they have not co-operated with God's Grace by a Purification of their Heart and Soul; but by their own Transgressions have separated themselves yet more from God.

VI. *The foregoing Objections literally understood is against the proposers of it.*

VI. But to leave nothing unanswered in this pretended Demonstration, let us see what can be made of it, if taken in a literal Strictness: God will render to every Man according to his Works: What ought we to infer from hence? Why that as little Children have done no Works, so he will render nothing to them; but leave 'em as he finds 'em; without concerning himself at all about 'em: And herein consists the Essence of Damnation; if God leave to himself a Creature of an Infinite, Intelligent, Aspiring Nature, if he do not cease to shine, or to act, or make Impression on it, it becomes Miserable in the Supreme Degree: So that according to this boasted Demonstration, the Children of both Good and Bad, who die before they have done Good or Evil, must be damned alike; which is a Cruel Sentence to pass on all, but naturally follows from the Argument of these Objecters.

VII. *How God do's truly tho' indirectly render to little Children according to their Works.*

VII. Whereas by our Hypothesis one ought to say that if God renders nothing to them who have done no Works, and leaves them as he finds them; then, if he finds them grafted on a good Stock, and part of Persons who live in the Element of Grace, he will leave them in his Grace, *i. e.* in Salvation: For God cannot absolutely forsake what is in the Element of Mercy: and if he finds others rooted in an Evil Stock, and part of Persons that are in the Element of Impurity and Sin, he who can have no Communion with the impure will leave them in their Sin, and Separation from him: Tho I do not deny, but he may by his Infinite Mercy, Wisdom and Power, lay their Faculties asleep, and make them Insensible, as it were to their Miseries, as Mercy and Justice shall direct. Here then we see how this Rule of Equity, God will render

render to every one according to his Works, which speaks directly of such as have actually done Good or Evil, do's admirably accord with the Truths advanced by us, tho' apply'd to Subjects who have done no Works.

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VIII. Another Objection: It is Impossible to be a Sinner, but either by Act or by Habit. Children, about whom we are now disputing, are not so by Act. By Habits they cannot be, because Habits are acquired only by repeated Acts: And therefore they are not Sinners: I answer there are two ways of acquiring Habits, first in an Active Manner, *i. e.* by a Subjects repeated Acts: Or Secondly, Passively: When an Effect, a Subject derives it from its Cause; as when from Non-existent it becomes Existent and like its Cause. An Effect holds from its Cause all the Realities Essential to it: Nor is this difficult to be comprehended. Suppose a Cause or Origin to be defective in Realities, respecting certain Objects, or a certain Conduct. Every Production of it will be defective also: So here is the Habit, and the Communication of it. The Habit of Evil is not (as such) a positive Thing; but a Negation, or Privation rather: There is in a Habit first a Positive and Active Subject, a strong Active Power exerting itself in a certain Manner: This is positively transmitted from the Cause to its Effect: There is Secondly in this Active Power, a Defect of Reality and Perfection: Which is transmitted negatively, *i. e.* where a Cause or Origin is defective in any Reality or Perfection, its Effect is also deficient in it and thus we may conceive the Propagation of Evil Habits.

VIII. A  
fifth Ob-  
jection ta-  
ken from  
the Consi-  
deration  
of Acts,  
and Ha-  
bits. How  
Habits  
are trans-  
mitted to  
a Subject  
that ne-  
ver acted.

IX. Instance. Habits and Inclinations of this Nature are not Evil when resisted, but Occasions of Virtue rather.

IX. Our  
Natural  
Inclinati-  
ons are in

*themselves very depraved; but the Grace of God restrains their Malignity till by degrees it is extinguish'd.*

*Resp.* Men reason too fast by Instances like this, if we will proceed fairly, we must say these Habits were at first acquired and produced by the wicked Damnable acts of a Sinner, Malicious Sinner, without Excuse. Therefore they are sinful in themselves.

*Secondly,*

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*Secondly*, They naturally tend only to repeat the culpable Acts, by which they were produced; therefore they are sinful in themselves.

*Thirdly*, When committed by the Father to the Child, they passed by means of a Consent actually given to them, and also of Subjects that have not extinguish'd, nor subdued them, but suffer them still to live in themselves: Therefore considered Originally, and as communicated they are sinful.

*Fourthly*, Children in whom these Habits, and Inclinations are naturally inclined to Evil and not to Good. Therefore they are sinful in themselves, and as derived on us.

*Fifthly*, If they are Occasions of Virtue, it is resistance makes them so. Therefore they are Vicious in themselves.

In fine. It is Impossible to resist them, but by God's Grace and Operation, who knocks at the Heart to be let in, in order to mortifie, and destroy them, and to introduce a new life into it. If we admit him by a Voluntary Consent, and Resignation of our Liberty to him. Therefore in themselves they are wicked Enemies of God, of a mortal Damning Nature: And all who are Subject to them are plunged in the Source of Eternal Death, and therein abide, till the Holy Spirit of God visit them by his Grace, and draw them out. But to proud, corrupt Souls who glory in opposing his Holy Spirit, making its immediate Gracious Operations which alone can reform the Corruption of their Hearts, the Subject of their Raillery, and ridicule this Gracious Spirit will never come. But Reflexions of this Nature belong more properly to another place.

X. A

X. I will next proceed to certain Objections which *Sixth and Vossius* proposes as Insolvable by him, and whether *Seventh* they are so or not by the Vulgar System of Original *Objections*. Sin I do not inquire, but shall shew that they are but as chaff before the Truths herein asserted.

One of his Objections is thus in form: It is not possible for *Adam* to transmit his Sin to his posterity, but either as a Moral, or as a Physical and Efficient Cause: There being no Medium:

But



But he cannot transmit it as an Efficient or Physical Cause, because things not Existent, as *Adam* and his Sin are not, can't act as such; nor can he transmit it as a Moral, or simply as an Exemplary Cause; because Imputation is a mere Chimera, and the Imitation of *Adam's* Sin was condemned in the Pelagians:

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Therefore he neither do's nor can Communicate it at all to his Descendants.

Another thought to be very knotty and perplexing is thus: The Sin of *Adam* call'd Original Sin, is either an Actual or Habitual Sin of Every Man.

It is not an Actual, &c. Nor is it an Habitual one; there being only Acquired, Natural, and Infused Habits.

It is not acquired, for Children are incapable of such, nor is it Natural, or infused, of these God being the only Author.

Therefore it is a mere Chimera.

XI. To this last I answer, That its Minor Proposition is very false: It is false that Children are Incapable of Habits acquired by their Parents: It is false that God is the Author of our Natural Habits, if we call, by that name, Original Sin. It is false that he is the Author of infused ones, if we understand hereby that Depravation which from Parents is transfused to their Children, for to pass over at present that the privation which is in them can't be from God, I observe that all that is positive in them may be transmitted by Second Causes, unless we admit that Chimerical Hypothesis which denies all Activity of second Causes: But this Objection is already fully Answered in the Answer given to the last. See Art. 8.

XI. The  
Seventh  
Answered.

XII. All the Propositions of the other are faulty: The Major is Defective: For the Question do's not concern *Adam* only, but all Subordinate Parents between him and us: Indeed, if God, after *Adam's* Sin, had abandon'd him with all that might descend from him, and not renewed the offer of his Grace, they had all been certainly undone. But if *Adam* had not sinned, and one of the Inferiour Origins, which we are Born of had, we had been undone without him: And tho' *Adam* was re-admitted unto

XII. The  
Eighth  
Answered.

Grace,

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Grace, and accepted of it; if they of his Children whom we descend from have not ratify'd it; if they have not resisted and renounced Sin; but, following the bent of depraved Nature, have multiply'd Sin still more and more: It is intailed upon us by these Intermediate Origins as much as by the Original one; excepting that the Offer of Grace made to *Adam*, and to his Posterity stands firm and unalterable.

The Second Proposition is false, and the reason of it Ridiculous: It is false to deny that *Adam* communicates Sin as a Physical Cause: And ridiculous to alledge, as a reason of this Negation, that *Adam* is not Existent: He is, tho' not Existent, the Physical Cause of all Men: Have we forgot to distinguish these Causes into Proximate and Remote; Mediate and Immediate; Successive and Simultaneous? The Application of which being obvious even to a Child's Capacity, I content myself with a bare Mention of them:

XIII. A  
general  
Objection  
or rather

XIII. I will conclude the Objections against Original Sin, with a Summary Collection of all the Absurdities supposed to follow from it.

*a Collection of Several Objections, with answers to them.*

The doctrine of Original Sin Men have reason to regard, not only as useless; but as prejudicial to Religion. It serves only to give us very Criminal Ideas of God, as if, like a Tyrant, he created us only to destroy us. It encourages the Indifference of Sinners by furnishing them with a Specious Pretence, that Sin is unavoidable. It annihilates the Grace of Jesus Christ, by making one Sin of *Adam* more powerful to destroy, than the Blood and Covenant of the Redeemer are to save: It directly opposes the Prerogative of Men, their being more loved of God than the Rebel Angels, who were punished only for their own Actual Sin; whereas Men are damned for a Sin committed before they were Born, and to which they were not consenting: It makes God unjust: For if Original Sin deserve any Punishment, it ought to be proportioned to its Guilt, which consisting only in the Privation of an Original Righteousness deny'd by God, its Punishment should consist only in a Privation of

of Happiness, and not in an indispensable Obligation to Sin or Suffer. In fine, since we have sinned in *Adam*, Justice seems to require we should be punished in him, not he in us. These Objections, I suppose, are levell'd against the vulgar Doctrine of Original Sin, whereby it is made principally to consist in Imputation, and is not only beset on every side with pressing Difficulties ; but is in reality a mere Chimera, unworthy of God. But as it is proposed by us, they are mere Phantoms, as I proceed to shew by a particular Examination of them.

1st. Objection. The Doctrine of Original Sin Men have reason to regard not only as useless, but prejudicial to Religion. I answer, that Doctrine that denies it, ought to be look'd upon as the Foundation of our Hell, and Ruin of our Salvation ; since while we are infected with it, it is impossible to know the Sins and Miseries of our Nature, and consequently to purifie our selves there-from ; but are in danger of perishing obstinately with a Pride as deplorable and great, as is the blindness of our Heart : On the contrary, the acknowledging this Doctrine opens the way of Happiness, and makes Salvation attainable unto us ; in that we are hereby disposed to Humility, Hatred and Abnegation of our selves, and to seek, with Humility, God's Grace and Favour to our selves and our Posterity ; and God resists the Proud, and gives Grace to the Humble, *1 Pet. 5. 5.*

2d. *Object.* It serves only to give us very Criminal Ideas of God, as if like a Tyrant, he created us only to destroy us. *R.* This Objection against Original Sin, as explain'd by us, has no shadow of Truth. By all that I have said of it, and its Propagation, 'tis plain, that God hath done his utmost to hinder its Event, and to perpetuate the Felicity of Man, and it will appear in the following Books, that God will continue to the Consummation of the World, to do all he can to stop its Progress and Effects, and to reduce Mankind to the End of their Creation, *viz.* Eternal Life.



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3d. *Object.* It encourages the indifference of Sinners, by furnishing them with a specious pretence, that Sin is unavoidable. *R.* They who are come to an Age of Reason and Reflection, and would find out Pretences to favour a careless, loose behaviour, will never find them in the pretended necessity of sinning, or impossibility of avoiding the Evils they are inclined to; because these Pretences are altogether false; since God hath offer'd unto all Mankind Pardon, Grace, Light, Strength and Means for avoiding Evil, and doing Good, as will appear in the following Treatises. But the denial of Original Depravation is a Hellish Poyson that cherishes Pride of Heart, and the Motions of depraved Nature, in which all Sin is generated; and furnishes a pretence of abiding obstinately in it, and of living and dying, blind, insensible, hardened, and a Sacrifice of Hell.

4th. *Object.* It annihilates the Grace of Jesus Christ by making one Sin of *Adam* more powerful to destroy, than the Blood and Covenant of the Redeemer are to save. *R.* This is an absurd Objection; Destruction is not an Effect of Power, but a real Impotence. More Vertue is required to produce a single thought that is Good, than to commit a World of Sins; the Grace of Jesus Christ, renewed to *Adam*, and to his Posterity, is sufficient (as will be shewed in due time) to save all Mankind; if received with Humility and Resignation of their Liberty to it, but if by Neglect, Obstinacy, Blindness, Pride and Damnable Presumption, that they do not need it, and that its immediate interior Operation in their Souls, is a Chimera, Men render themselves unworthy of it, and reject it, it is not therefore less divinely vertuous, tho' a single Soul be not actually saved by it, if they continue obstinate in their Indispositions.

5th. *Object.* It directly opposes the Prerogative of Men, their being more loved of God than the Rebel-Angels, who were punished only for their own actual Sin; whereas Men are damn'd for a Sin committed before they were born, and to which they were not consenting. *R.* These Difficulties have been already answer'd, the Prerogative of Men above the Angels

hath

hath been proved in the plac'd refer'd to in the \* Margin. It is falsely supposed in this Objection, that God does punish and condemn Men positively to Hell: He only leaves them such as he finds them, without concerning himself about them. In fine, it is as false that he leaves them in the damnable Estate in which he finds them, as that he ordains them to it: God offers his Grace and Blessedness to all, and is ready to ordain them to the Heavenly Joys, provided they correspond as he enables them; an Advantage which the Rebel-Angels had not: That Children do not contribute to the impurity of their Origin, as it does unto theirs, is not to be wonder'd at, since 'tis natural for the Cause to contribute to the Qualities of the Effect, and not for the Effect to the Qualities of the Cause.

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\* Ch. 16.  
7, 9, 10.

6th. *Object.* It makes God unjust; for if Original Sin deserve any Punishment, it ought to be proportion'd to its Guilt, which if it consist only in the Privation of an Original Righteousness denied by God, its Punishment should consist only in a Privation of Happiness, and not in an indispensable Obligation to Sin or Suffer. *R.* This Objection is all over faulty; First, I retort that that Doctrine which denies the Original Depravation of Children, makes God unjust, because it asserts, that our Souls, tho' created pure, and put into Bodies undefiled; are indispensibly subjected to not only a thousand Sufferings and Uneasinesses; but also unto Sin, since whoever is born into this depraved World, cannot naturally avoid it, when he comes to the use of Reason, as cannot be denied without the extremest blindness. Secondly, It supposes falsly, that Original Righteousness is denied us by God; whereas it is Man rejects it: God, on his part, is ready and disposed to give it if Men were careful not to oppose it. Thirdly, It supposes falsly, that God does positively inflict Punishment upon us, subjecting us inevitably to a necessity of Sin and Suffering. Fourthly, It contradicts it self where it requires that the Punishment of Sin should consist in the Privation of Happiness, and not in an indispensable Obligation

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ligation to Sin and Suffer: The Privation of true Happiness, or of God the Fountain of it, from whom we are separated by Sin being inseparable from the unhappy necessity of Sin and Suffering, or rather is in Substance the same thing to whoever lives in this miserable World, and enjoys his Liberty and the Faculties of his Nature, as none who considers the Truths contained in the former Treatise can I believe deny. Now this Privation is a Natural Effect of Sin, and not a positive Punishment, inflicted by another, and alterable in its Nature, as this Objection absurdly does suppose; in fine, the Objection does not take notice, that as on one hand Man is unhappily brought under a deplorable Necessity of Sinning and of Suffering, even as when a Man has lost his sight, all the Members of his Body will necessarily suffer in their Conduct, and be hurt by the Bodies they jut against: So, on the other, God is so far from inflicting Punishments in a positive way, that he presents his Graces unto Men to free them from the unhappy Necessity to which they are by their own default reduced.

7th. *Object.* In fine, since we have sinned in *Adam*, Justice seems to require we should be punished in him, not he in us. *R.* This Reasoning is very bad: First, It supposes falsely, that the Justice of God inflicts direct and positive Punishments on *Adam* and his Descendants; whereas to punish them he needs only to withdraw his Influences from them, and leave the Head-spring and its Streams as they are, and do naturally flow from one another. How absurd is it to pretend, that because we sinned in *Adam*, and while we were contained in him as in our Principle, we ought not to partake of the Punishment naturally consequent to that Sin, when our Existence is separate from him? As if an Effect should say, since it is only in my Cause that I was affected with, and deprived of such certain Qualities, when I leave my Cause and exist out of it, why do not these Effects and Privations remain in it, without descending upon me? Why hath not God ordained that an Evil Cause should produce a Good Effect? Or why hath he so constituted



constituted Things, that an evil Cause does constantly produce an Effect as deficient as it self? To pretend to justify Reasonings like to these, one must have renounced Common Sense. I answer then, that strictly speaking God does not positively punish any; but when an Effect hath sinned in its Cause, *i. e.* when a Cause hath sinned, while the Effect was in it, it is impossible for that Effect when brought into a separate Existence to sin in it, or to be affected in it by the Effects of Sin: Since it is not in it, it cannot be affected in it: But Sin and Privation are Essential to it, on account of the Deficiency of its Cause, because it is a Portion of, and out-flowed from it, and therefore naturally partakes of its Realities and Defects. Go then, complain of God, that before the Idea and Event of Sin, he ordained that every Thing should produce its like; a Complaint which they are guilty of in a very high Degree, who ask, *Why hast thou made me thus?* Or why hast thou ordained as a Rule in Nature, that every Being should reproduce it self?

XIV. Now after these rare Objections, may we not conclude this Subject, and boldly ask, if they do not afford a sufficient Light to free us from the foolish Prejudices of Childhood, and the Schools? And if we may not conclude, that God hath illuminated our Minds upon these Subjects, and that we ought to cultivate these Truths, that they may fructify in our Hearts? Good God! if the Light that is in you be Darkness, how great is that Darkness? O miserable Light whereby the wretched Sons of Adam, born of the Will of Flesh and Blood, and of the Will of Man are blinded, that they do not see their Original Pollution, but persuade themselves and others, that they are sound and clean; stifle God's Gracious Inspirations, and enervate the Holy Scriptures which convince them of their damnable Estate, to follow the proud Chimeras with which the Devil inspires their depraved Reason! The Doctrine of Imputation which by some is made a Part of Original Sin, is, I acknowledge absurd, even to the Eye of Humane Reason:

XIV. Reason by attempting to free itself from Prejudices relating to Original Sin, is fallen into mortal Errors.

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But, behold the Perversity of Mankind ! Because we meet with so palpable Errors on many Occasions, that Reason is offended at them, and is capable to confute them ; because it is successful in many Things, shall we, rejoicing in the good Offices it does us, take it to be our Guide, our Light, our God in every Thing ? Shall we follow its Guidance and Direction only, and think to rescue our selves from all Prejudice and Error by it ? Shall we run from one Extreme into another, introducing dangerous Heresies in the room of little Errors, honouring them with the Title of Lights of God, tho' in reality they arise from the Abyss of Darknes ?

XV. They  
who have  
made use  
of Humane  
Reason to  
answer  
themselves  
from the  
Prædesti-  
narian  
Errors  
have fall'n  
into more  
mortal and  
dangerous  
ones.

XV. An Instance of this Procedure we have in the Management of the Prædestinarian Controversie : Reason alone was capable to discover its Falsity, as proposed by *Calvin*, the *Jansenists*, *Thomists*, and *Supra-Lapsarians* : And what Method did their Adversaries the Remonstrants take ? Why, they, when required dogmatically to believe that God had destin'd some to Salvation, and others to Damnation without any regard to their Faith and Works, perceived plainly that this Doctrine interfer'd with Reason, as well as Scripture ; and therefore did well to refuse assenting to it : Their Adversaries hereupon insisted, that all Mankind being by Original Sin plunged in Death, God was free to rescue from it whom he pleased, and to leave others in it ; for a Proof of which they produce the Example of the Children of Pagans and Infidels, who die in an infant State and are lost, which shews that the Grace of God is not Universal, but Particular : that he does not only not privilege all with the Means of external Vocation to the Gospel ; but that, even among the Called, many have not the interior Grace of Faith immediately and effectually operating in them ; and consequently their Notion of Prædestination was right and true. Others taking their Aim by another Evass, that they might not offend by Propositions of so harsh a Sound, owned that God did will the Salvation of all Men, and offer'd his Grace to all, but that Men who, absolutely speak-

ing,

ing, might, if they had pleased, have accepted it by Faith, were so depraved and perverse in Heart and Will, that none of all Mankind would have been converted and believed, had not God decreed to give the Grace of Faith and of Conversion unto some (*viz.* the Elect) and not to others, (*viz.* the Reprobate). This is the Hypothesis of the *Amyraldists*, the same in Substance as the other, but more ridiculous and inconsistent: The first pretend, that God seeing all Men in a diseased Condition, was pleased only to heal a few, without offering Remedies to the rest. The second, that seeing all in this diseased State, he seriously desired the Recovery of them all, and presented accordingly Remedies to them, which they, possess'd with a Phrensie, refused to use; whereupon God having a Specifick to cure their Phrensie, was pleased to administer it to some and not to others, tho' he seriously desired the Health and Recovery of all. With Objections of this Nature they press'd the Antiprædestinarians, who instead of using humble Recourse to God, in their interiour, to be illuminated by his good Spirit upon these Difficulties, depended on their Humane Erudition, and Literal Knowledge of the Scriptures, and the Conduct and Light of Reason, which had successfully enough detected an Error palpable in it self, thinking themselves with this presumptuous Furniture able to dissipate all Clouds of Errors, to penetrate every Thing, and to enter into all Sort of Truths: Tho' instead of disengaging from the Error, and solving the Difficulty proposed to them, they have plunged themselves into more pernicious ones; for instead of owning that by *Adam's* Sin all Mankind was involved in a damnable Estate, and that God hath renewed in him the Offer of Grace and Pardon unto All, provided as they came to the Use of Liberty they did accept it; they absolutely denied the Original Corruption and Perdition, held it to be a Nothing, and Original Righteousness a mere Chimera; that Man was created in a mortal, ignorant, gross, infirm Estate, like that he is in at present. Instead of refuting the second Instance by an-



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swering, that it is not to be wonder'd at if Children, whose Parents did never admit God's Grace, died in a State of Misery and Perdition, since being Effects and Parts of a Subject that opposed God, they could derive from it only the Qualities belonging to it; but that God, notwithstanding, did present his Grace universally to all, not excepting their wicked Parents, who had Power to accept it, to their own and Childrens Benefit; they have ventured to maintain, that all Children were in a saving State, supposing us hereby to be by Nature not Sinners, but just. In fine, instead of allowing that Man of himself is so corrupt that he cannot convert to God, nor live to Faith, without the Assistance of Grace interiourly operating in him: Instead of owning, that this Grace, the only Source and Root of Faith and true Conversion, and of all the Good that can be in us, is most universal on the Part of God, given even to them who are without the Letter of the Gospel, God being present to operate Faith and Salvation indifferently in the Hearts of all; but that Men freely oppose his interiour Operations, notwithstanding which his Grace is most Universal: Instead hereof I say, their blinded Reason, not comprehending the Nature of Faith, and of the Grace of God, thought to solve the Objections of their Adversaries, by roundly denying the Necessity of the interiour and immediate Operation of God's Holy Spirit, in order to Conversion, Illumination, Faith, Regeneration, and by treating this interior Grace, as a Fiction and Chimera, which is the most pernicious Heresie that ever was hatch'd in Hell. I speak not this in Opposition or Ill Will to any; on the contrary, I have a great Compassion for all who are engaged in this fatal Error, and heartily beseech God to deliver them from it, by an inward Experimental Sense and feeling of that Grace which they deny, because they know it and desire it not: And this I do with the more Concern, forasmuch as it is not from my self, that I my self am not involved in it; for a Time there was when I made an Idol of my miserable Reason, and

was

was far advanced in the Denial of Original Sin by the Ways and Difficulties I have mentioned: but God hath graciously recovered me from it, by, not the Force of my depraved Reason, nor the Writings of the Learned, but those \* marked in the Margin, by Means of which he hath touch'd and illuminated my Heart, and given me Light and Satisfaction as to all these Things as well as all other, Divine and Human, Natural and Supernatural. But these Difficulties relating to the Grace of God, and the Universality of it, I only touch on by the By, because I shall treat them elsewhere *ex professo*: My Reader then need not make his Objections here, nor yet conclude that these Sentiments are common to all of the forementioned Party; on the contrary, the Author cited in the Margin, had such an Abhorrence of them, that one cannot better depaint their Horror than he has done in the Divine Treatise referr'd to †. But Successors do often so strangely degenerate from their Predecessors, that they become in time diametrically opposite to every Thing that is Good in them.

XVI. Now in treating this Subject I have not cited many Texts of Scripture to confirm these Truths; for the Scripture does rather suppose than prove them, as it does many others, particularly the Immortality of the Soul. Not but that in many Places they are plainly proposed in it; and besides the whole Oeconomy of Man's Redemption, and Reason of his Conversion, are founded on them. It were superfluous to insist on Things, which unless we are wilfully blind, and stifle the Voice of Reason and of Conscience, we can't be ignorant of. What need to prove that Man is Mortal? That he is subject to infinite Evils and Disorders? That if Trees do bring forth evil Fruit, it is because themselves are evil, and this only to stop the Mouths of a few Hypocendriacal Men who maintain the contrary? What Good can one hope from Arguments, while they are distemper'd in their Brain and Humours? In like manner I ask, to what purpose is it to prove by Scripture that we are originally depraved, to Men

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\* Acad. of Learned Divines, Part 1. Ch. 1, 2, 3. and Light of the World, Part 3. Ch. 21, 22, &c by Ant. Bourignon.  
† Herm. Herbert's Explic. Epist. ad Rom. Part 2. Ch. 1, 2, 3.  
XVI. Why in treating this Subj. &c. I have not insisted on many Texts of Scripture.

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whose Hearts the Enemy of Souls hath blinded? The Hypochondriacal Person will laugh with security at whatever is said to undeceive him: Now can we expect a better Effect from them, who are so wretchedly blind as to mistake their own Darknes for Light it self? the more industrious they are to enervate Scripture, the more boldly will they insult it; and tho' some may act with a good Intention, it does not alter the Natures of Things, make that to be right and true which in it self is false; but they are in danger of becoming by this Means habitual Haters and Falsifiers of the Truth.

XVII. A

Passage of

St. Paul

alleged

to prove

Original

Sin, vin-

dicated.

\* Ephes.

2. 3.

XVII. An Example whereof, among many others, we have in the Answer given to that Text in the *Ephesians*, \* *We were by Nature Children of Wrath*.

Is it not great Ignorance or Injustice to cite the Authority of an Apostle to prove what is not true?

When a Doctor, with an Air of Severity hath said, that we are all by Nature Children of Wrath, it seems as if there were no Exception; and this Authority, I believe, inspir'd you with an Assurance of Victory: But I advise you to consult the sacred Authors a little better, before you cite their Authority, lest you be cover'd with Confusion by them. You will not find in the Epistle to the *Ephesians*, that all Men, both young and old, are subject to God's Wrath by Nature, but they only were expos'd to it, who were plunged in Idolatry and Heathenish Disorders like the *Ephesians*.

Now who would think but that they who are so forward in reproaching others with citing Scripture falsely, and so boldly threaten to cover them with Confusion, should be the most strict Observers, and best Expositors of it? when notwithstanding none are more indisposed to understand the true Sense of the Scripture than these Men with all their Critical Skill, which, as a Man who is blind, does only touch the outside Bark, not knowing that an interiour Juice lies concealed under.

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Critics

XVIII. To illustrate this with a Similitude; let's imagine that certain blind Men, confined to the Ca-

por Languages cannot discover the true Sense of Holy Scripture.



verns of the Earth, and having their Eyes bound down, hear talk of Light; and, in order to understand its Nature, search after the *Latin* Names of Light, and learn to decline and conjugate the Verbs to shine, and to illuminate, and by the Help of Indexes and Dictionaries, find out how oft they are used in Profane or Sacred Authors, and then fondly imagine they know what Light is, and can explain its Nature and the Discourses about it, of Persons enlighten'd by its Beams; and trusting to their Knowledge of Words, and to the Chimerical Ideas they have formed of it, go on to ridicule any who tell them their Index Learning will never help them to explain its Nature, unless they leave their dark Caverns, and receive the Beams of Light from another Spring than that of their Reason or Fancy; and therefore they must untie the Fillets that bind their Eyes, and receive within a Vertue efficacious to heal their darkened Sight. Herein we see a true Representation of our Criticks, and their Way of treating those Divine and Spiritual Things of which illuminated Saints have left Discourses in the Holy Scriptures: Of those Criticks, I mean, who do not make the Divine interior Light, and immediate Operations of God's Spirit, their great Dependence, but ridicule it rather, depending on their Natural Powers, and the Letter and Phrase of Scripture. The most ignorant Peasant, if humble, is better disposed to comprehend the Sense and experience the Reality of Scripture, than they who wholly depend on the Furniture of Human Learning, Dictionaries, Languages, and Remarks of the exterior Circumstances which attend the Use of Scripture Terms: They observe, *e. g.* that the Use of the Words Light and Truth is circumstantiated thus and thus in Scripture, or applied to Things in such external Modes; and this they remember, tho' what the Thing in Substance is they are wholly ignorant; and when a Man applies these Terms to Things in different Circumstances, and affirms concerning them, that they are Luminous or Obscure; this gives our Criticks a Handle for Dispute, an Occasion to threaten Confu-

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sion to you, as guilty of a false Citation and of applying the Scripture Terms to other Circumstances than they were at first used and intended. If you insist, that it argues Blindness to act thus ; that Persons illuminated by God, have applied them to other Things seen and experienc'd by them ; they go on to insult your pretended Illumination, appeal to Dictionaries and Heathen Authors as the only Judges ; and having a Gust for these, require Examples that these Words have been used by them in the Circumstances to which you do apply them : Otherwise, if our Reasoning be not conformable to the Ideas of our Criticks, nothing but Confusion is to be expected from them : and therefore in order to convince them of their Error, I shall endeavour to explain the Passage in dispute by their own Rules.

XIX Pass-  
ages of  
Scripture  
particu-  
larly cir-  
cumstan-  
ciated do  
contain  
Truths of  
a General  
Applica-  
tion.

XIX. The Texts of Scripture are almost all short sententious Truths, of a general Nature and Application, or Truths independent of the particular Circumstances of the Subject they are applied to ; so that, by a little Illumination from above, one may apply them to infinite other Subjects that are not in the individual Circumstances in which they are us'd in Scripture, provided they agree in a certain Generality of Nature and Estate : So that one may sometimes, by the Rule of Contraries, apply a Passage to a Subject that is opposite to it when it corresponds by an Anti-type of Opposition. This Truth tho' uncontestable, our Criticks are ignorant of, or purposely conceal, who no sooner hear a Passage of Scripture cited that is opposite to their Errors, but they precisely mark the Circumstances of it, and if they can find any Particularities in it, not to be found in the Use and Application of it, make an Outcry of Ignorance and false Citations ; and denounce Shame and Confusion to one : Nay, some there are \* who not long ago endeavour'd on this Ground to expose St. *Austin*, and represent him as the worst Interpreter of Scripture that ever liv'd, which they pretend to prove *ad aperturam Libri* ; which doubtless they did by this rare Method. Nor

\* Mr le  
Clerc.

needed

needed they to have come so low as St. *Austin*: Had they only examined the Old and New Testament by the Rules of Critiques, they might have concluded that the Writers of the New (not excepting even Jesus Christ,) do almost every where cite the Old Testament falsely, and apply it to Subjects in different Circumstances. As our Lord applies to himself by the way of Opposition of Anti-types, what *Zachary* said concerning Anti-Christ or false Prophets, \* *Strike the Shepherd, and the Sheep shall be scattered*: Had not these Men been educated in a Belief of the Divine Inspiration of the Scriptures, and were they minded to examine the Citations made by the Evangelists and Apostles by their Rules of Criticism, they would insult and ridicule them as contrary to their false and barren Measures. The Extent and Universality of inspired Truths are not comprehensible by these Arts; nor can they make us to conceive that besides the Grammatical, Literal, and Cortical Sense, which the Animal and Carnal may comprehend, there is a Spiritual one, and even manifold Senses proceeding from Depth to Depth, which none can comprehend unless he be illuminated by God; which Glorious Lights, as well as the true Sense of Scripture, are \* Foolishness to the Natural depraved Man.

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\* Zach.  
13. 7.  
Mat. 26.  
31.

\* 1 Cor. 2.  
14.

XX. Tho' the Passage in dispute, *we were Children of Wrath*, was apply'd by the Apostle to the Adult *Ephesians*, who had been Idolatrous Sinners, it is notwithstanding a Universal Truth, applicable to all Mankind, considered as Children of Sinful *Adam* and of Depraved Parents, and is so intended by the Apostle, as is apparent from the Subject and Design of this Epistle as well as of all the Gospel; which is, that none can be restored to Peace with God, nor attain Salvation, but by rising in Jesus Christ the Second *Adam*, and by being regenerate in him; the Necessity of which is founded on this Truth, viz. that our Natural Life derived from *Adam* is an Enemy of God, wholly depraved and corrupt; it is Enmity and Death before God, and therefore we must destroy and mortify it by a total Abnegation, Crucifixion, and Burial of all our Principles and Motions, and

XX. That in St. Paul's Sense this Passage Eph. 2. 3. is applicable to every Child of Adam, proved by the Scope and Design of his Epistles and of the Gospel.



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and every Thing belonging to us; the Fruits with the Tree and its Root; the Body and Heart of the Old Man, Reason, Passions, and every Thing: Because all is out of the Element of Peace, and the new Life of Jesus Christ, of the Holy Spirit, and his Love; and in the Element of War, of Wrath and Death and Separation from God. Now these two Truths, (*viz.*) 1. That to be restored to Peace with God, and attain Salvation, we must rise again and Live in Jesus Christ: And 2ly, (That before we rise again in Jesus Christ we are Enemies of God, subject to Death, and Children of Wrath:) Are equally universal and extensive: And have Children then no need to live again in Jesus Christ in order to Salvation? If the unrighteous Off-spring attained the Use of Reason before any Actual Sin committed, none will I presume deny the Necessity of Mortifying their Natural Bents, and Inclinations as born of Flesh and Blood, in order to attain Salvation; or that the Element of the Holy Spirit, which they must enter into in order to a *New Birth*, and Resurrection, is of a different Nature from that of their Natural Birth: It follows then that they are born in the Element of Death, and of the Wrath of God.

XXI Pro-  
ued by col-  
lating the  
text with  
other Pas-  
sages of  
Scripture.  
\* Thesaur.  
Eccles.  
Suiceri ad  
vocem,  
φύσις.

XXI. Secondly, St. Paul expressly says *we were by Nature Children of Wrath*: Now what can the Criticks make of this? Why a certain \* Dictionary tells us that *Clement of Alexandria* interprets by Nature, to mean Truly: Whereupon with an Air of Confidence they bid us to remember well; That to be by Nature Children of God's Wrath, simply means, to be truly worthy of his Wrath. But *Clement*, I hope, will give me leave to prefer a Sense that is natural and proper, to a violent and improper one. Let Scripture then explain itself, and on its Authority I will presume to advertize these Criticks in their own Language; To remember well that to be by Nature Children of God's Wrath imports, To be Objects of his Disfavour even from one's Birth derived from sinful *Adam*. This Word *by Nature* (φύσις,) is five times used in the New Testament; And twice it signifies the Nature of a Thing, the Thing itself, its Essence, Constitution,

Constitution, Faculties, and Operations, \* *Then when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no Gods*; says the Apostle, *i. e.* to Things that are not of a Divine Nature and Property: † *Every kind of Beasts are tamed by the Nature of Man*, saith St. James, *i. e.* by Man himself, by the Faculties and Operations essential to him. Now it is certain, that when Men are denominated Children of Wrath by Nature, it is not to be understood in this Sense; it is not in virtue of their Substance, their Faculties and Operations physically considered: But in the three other Places it signifies by Birth, *i. e.* by the Impressions and Dispositions born with us. St. Paul relating his Contest with St. Peter says, *¶ We are Jews by Nature, and not Sinners of the Gentiles*; meaning for certain we are born Jews or are so by Birth. This is for certain the Sense of this Word, when it do's not denote the Estate and Properties of a Thing: And as it is undoubted that St. Paul's Meaning was not that his own and St. Peter's Humanity did consist in Judaism; so when he says, *We were Children of Wrath by Nature*, he means we are born so, and are such by Birth. The last Place where this Term is used, it is thus exprest; \* *If the Heathen having not the Law, do by Nature the things contained in the Law, &c.* where the Apostle supposes that the Heathens by following the Instincts which God hath implanted in them at their Birth and Formation may do what is just. For in the Formation or Birth of Man are to be considered.

1. That which they partake of, and inherit from their sinful Parents, that as such they are void of the Grace of God, and Children of his Wrath. And 2ly, That to raise their depraved Nature, God joyns thereto a Ray of his Grace and Light Divine, which enlightens every Man that comes into the World, and enables them to resist the sinful Inclinations of their Nature: To these Gracious Instincts, St. Paul refers where he says, *The Heathens do by Nature the things contained in the Law*, *i. e.* by that Gracious Principle infus'd from the Birth even into them who, from their Parents inherit contrary Dispositions that subject them to God's Wrath.

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Gal. 4.  
8.  
† C. 3-7.  
Gal. 2. 15.

\* Rom 2. 14.

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XXII. The  
Nullity of  
the Ob-  
jections  
made a-  
gainst the  
true Sense  
of this  
Passage.

XXII. Now to object that Natural Things do never change, that it is impossible for one who is by Nature a Child of Wrath, to change and become a Child of Grace: To pretend that to suppose Mankind to be Sinners by Nature, (which cannot be chang'd,) is to make God the Author of Sin, is more trifling: This Argument would hold good if one were to understand by Nature the Substance, Essence, and Property of a Thing; but not when it signifies the Estate, Qualities, and Dispositions with which a Thing is born: This is what I affirm is capable of Change, and if it be evil is not from God. But I pass over these little Sophisms without further Notice, and all other such like Discourses which contain an Apology for the Pharisees who fancy the Wrath of God belongs only to the scandalously wicked, the Covetous, Adulterers and the like, and not to the Holy presumptuous Pharisees who are just and righteous from their Birth, and leading regular Lives are not as other Men, tho' in truth, they as well as others are Originally a Brood of Vipers, stray'd from God even from the Womb, and penetrated with the Leaven of the Lust of the Eyes, and of the Flesh, and with the Pride of Life, and the Darkness of Death. Nor do I say any thing here of the Duration of Sin in the Faithful, because this Question belongs not to this Place.

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That it is  
needless to  
insist on  
other  
Texts of  
Scripture  
that prove  
Original-  
Sin.  
\* Gen. 6.  
9. and 8.2.

XXIII. In fine I will not insist on other Passages of Scripture, where Man is declared to be so perverse and depraved by Nature, and from his Birth, that his Thoughts and Imagination no sooner begin to act, or bring forth Fruit, but they continually tend to Evil. If it be allowed as some will have it, that by *\* the Imagination of Man's Heart*, we are only to understand Voluntary Acts, how can one more expressly affirm that a Thing is depraved in its Principle and Fund, than by saying, That as soon as it begins to act, its Acts and Operations will be Evil: A Wicked Man produces no Act in Sleep, and yet he is depraved in his Fund, not only on account of Actions past, but because he stands disposed to repeat them when he wakes. So it is of the Nature which we derive from *Adam*, and our Predecessors. Could this Nature act with Liberty and Knowledge as soon as it is born, its Acts would



would be of an Evil Nature; but during Infancy it is as a wicked Man a Sleep who as soon as he awakes will do Evil, unless God's Grace prevent and hold him in. But I further add that *The Imagination of the Heart of Man*, as exprest in *Genesis*, do's not denote its voluntary Acts; but contrarily the Principle and Fund, which is in Children, who necessarily do Evil when they come to the Use of Reason, because the inward Spring of Action is poysoned and depraved. Let us consider the Text, and keep close to it. The Design of God is to shew why he was going to destroy Mankind, the Infants that hang on their Mothers Breasts, as well as the Adult. The Reason given, is because *God saw that every Imagination of the Heart of Man was only Evil continually*: Which if apply'd to Actual, Voluntary Sin, the Sense will be, that because the Thoughts and Acts of the Adult were Evil continually before God, he therefore purposed to destroy with them even little Children, and such as were as yet unborn; the Absurdity and Injustice of which reasoning is too visible to be attributed to God. And therefore the Passage must be understood of a depraved Disposition, which even Children had: And when God soon after the Deluge says, *I will no more Curse the Earth for the sake of Man, for the Thoughts of their Hearts are Evil from their Youth*: What can we suppose in reason to be meant, but that since the Malice of Man is so universal, that if God were minded to chastize it where-ever it was found, he would often be forced to exterminate Mankind, not sparing even the Infants, he resolved to tolerate their Depravation, and not send upon them such general Judgments, tho' they might well deserve them? And herein Original Sin is manifestly supposed and imply'd.

I pass over other Passages in *Job*, the *Psalms*, and especially the 5th Ch. of the Epistle to the *Romans*, a Place not to be enervated, but by such ridiculous Glosses as must make the Apostle say; *All Men have not sinned in Adam* as an Effect, sins in its Cause while it is in it. That *Adam* who actually sinned, hath not brought Sin into the World over all who should be born of him, and tast of Death; That *Death is not an Effect of Sin*; and in fine, that by *Adam's Transgression*

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*Transgression none was made a Sinner besides himself; because as they pretend none can become a Sinner but by his own individual Disobedience: All which Propositions are directly contradictory to St. Paul, and do gloss away the Letter of the Text. Hence then we may by the way observe to what Shifts depraved Nature is reduced when to dissemble its Depravation it is not ashamed to say that Black is signify'd by White. But I insist too much on a Thing which to whoever is not voluntarily blind, is Self-evident. He who will abide in Darkness, let him. Let us conclude this Chapter with acknowledging that Sin is the Sole Effect of the Liberty of Man, without the Divine Concurrence, and that Man and all Nature, together with all their Effects and Operations proceeding from them are ruined by it: And hasten to conclude this Book by drawing Conclusions from the Truths contained in it with reference to the Doctrine of Predestination.*

## C H A P. XVIII.

*A Conclusion of this Second Treatise, wherein the Truths contained in it are considered with Reference to Predestination.*

I. That the Creature was not engaged nor predestined to Sin or Punishment by the Whole, viz. the Second Treatise concerning the Ways of acting both of God and Man in reference to Sin, I do conclude; That God hath not predestined nor engaged Man of God.



HAVING considered in the foregoing Book the Original State of Man, and the Divine Qualities and Advantages with which the Creatures were endued, when they came forth of the Hands of God: I drew this Conclusion from the Whole, viz. That God had destined all Things to Eternal Life: And now from the Truths laid down in the Second Treatise concerning the Ways of acting both of God and Man in reference to Sin, I do conclude; That God hath not predestined nor engaged Man to

to fall into Sin or Punishment, by Idea, Decree, Consent, or Operation: But that they are Effects of the Creatures own most free Acts, Will, Consent, and Operation.

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II. This Conclusion is easy to be inferr'd from, and is evidently proved by the Truths contained in the former Treatise: And indeed as no Truth in Nature is so universally attested to, as the Goodness of God, and the infinite Hatred he bears to Sin: So, which way soever we turn our Eyes we discover fresh Evidences of it, and one needs only to reflect on what is contained in this Book to gain an entire Conviction of it. As,

II. This may be concluded from the Truths contained in the first, as well as in this second Book.

III. Particular Considerations from which this Truth clearly follows.

1. If we consider that when Man was re-establish'd in Grace and Virtue, with Liberty to persevere and advance in it, God did continually prevent him with his Divine Impressions, to engage and confirm him in it more and more.

2. If we consider that God was ready at hand to assist and strengthen all his Acts.

3. If we consider that God's pure free Grace and Benediction were prepared in answer to his first Correspondence.

4. If we consider that in view of Man's Fidelity, God had prepared his Habitual Graces of Concomitance, Benedictions, and even new preventing and Divine Interior Graces for him.

5. If we consider that in view of his Perseverance, he had prepared for him the Grace of perfect Establishment, and Confirmation past Danger of a Lapse.

6. If we consider that when Man was thus confirm'd, God would have removed all tempting Distracting Objects.

7. If we consider that the Idea of Sin is Nothing in itself, nor is establish'd by God.

8. If we consider that its Idea, and much more its Event, is repugnant to the Divine Conception, Decree or Will.

9. If we consider that tho' the Works of God are naturally Labile; yet Sin do's not naturally follow from them nor from their Operations; because Lability do's



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do's not necessarily infer it, nor give any positive Occasion to it, but rather unto Virtue.

10. If we consider, that God hath no Idea of Sin before its Actual Event.

11. If we consider, that the Idea of Sin in God is only an Idea of Light, reflected on him by a Creature refusing to admit it when presented to him.

12. If we consider, that before the Event of Sin, God did only foresee Happiness in his Creatures.

13. If we consider, that the Wicked will be at last everlastingly forgot by God ; but he will never forget his own Decrees, or the Objects of them.

14. If we consider, that Nothing and Sin do not depend on God for their Subsistence.

15. If we consider, that God and the Devil are entirely contrary to one another: And that he hates Evil as infinitely as the Devil loves it; and loves Good as infinitely as the Devil hates it.

16. If we consider, that Sin is not an Object of the Power, and much less of the Will of God.

17. If we consider, that God hath proposed himself, and not Evil or Imperfection, as the Object of his Creatures Liberty.

18. If we consider, that Man might have received all creaturely Impressions in their Original Order and Disposition, without being distract from God.

19. If we consider that no other Object besides God, do's directly and immediately impress the Faculties Divine.

20. If we Consider, that the Divine Impressions were stronger and more forcible than all Creatures.

21. If we consider, that Nothing either in Man, or in External Nature did engage him in Disorder.

22. If we consider, that to preserve Man from falling so desperately as the Angels, God was pleased to present Objects to him whose Impressions were of a more material Nature, than the Impressions made upon the Angels.

23. If we consider, that to preserve him from Distraction by Created Objects, God was pleased to rank himself among them, and converse corporeally with him.

24. If

24. If we consider that God did not suddenly withdraw his Graces, his Light, his Attractions and Conversation from Man, because of his first Frailties and Infirmities; but rather continued and increased them to him.

25. If we consider that to recal him to his Duty, God withdrew his Presence and Divine Graces by little and little, and at last left him wholly to himself, that Man might learn to regret his Loss, and do all he possibly could to recover God's Grace.

26. If we consider that the Devil had no Power to dart his dark depraved impressions upon Man, much less to communicate Sin unto him, which, is wholly barren, and not communicable in it self, and much less by the Intervention of the Will, Decree and Operation of God.

27. If we consider that God had rescued the Creatures from the power of the Devil, that he could not dispose of'em to Man's Destruction, this Dragon was fast bound in Chains of Darkness, there to abide far distant from the Light, had not Man let him loose by the Irregularity of his Liberty.

28. If we consider that God had ordained that Men should descend successively from one another, that being from their Birth habitually establish'd and confirmed in Virtue, there should be no Danger of their falling.

29. If we consider that he graciously warned Man, not to eat of that Tree which would deprave and hurt him, which proves that he only will'd his Life and Happiness.

30. If we consider that God when he saw that his Absence as well as Presence proved hurtful to him, substituted a Woman as a Help to recover his thoughts to God, and prevent his debasing himself by Creaturely Affections, by having continually present with him, an Object who being a Lively Image of God, was worthy of his Love.

31. If we consider, that all Evil Events were only from the Deficiency of a Cause, labile in its Nature, which therefore is and can be only Man. It is the last Impossibility for God to be a Deficient Cause, so as to propose an End to himself or others, and not

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furnish the Means proper to attain it: Which is the Idea of a Moral Deficient Cause.

32. If we consider that Sin in its whole Progress from its Birth to its Consummation, is only a voluntary Disapplication from God, and excessive Application to the Creatures, with a constant Resolution to continue in it, notwithstanding the Divine Admonition: Which cannot be absolutely will'd, decreed, nor approved by God.

33. If we consider that all the Effects and Punishments of Sin do come, not from God, but from Man alone, against the direct Consent of the Will of God, who a great while suspended the Effects of Sin, and did at last only indirectly punish by suffering the natural Consequences of the Sinner's Will to happen to him.

IV. *Idea of the justice of God. It do's not punish positively.*

IV. And this is the true Idea of *God's punitive Justice*, by which we ought to correct the Error we commit, by imagining that the Divine Justice do's positively punish, or rigidly requires this or that before it is appeased; a Thought that inclines to murmuring and Impatience, and gives us perverse and terrible Notions concerning God: For if it were thus, God would then stand in need of the Sufferings of his Creatures, or take pleasure in them, these being the only possible Principles by which he wills the Existence of any Thing, viz. either the Necessity of his Nature, or his Arbitrary pleasure. Now Nothing is necessary to God besides God himself, as hath been demonstrated in the foregoing Treatise: And to say that he hath ordained suffering by his Arbitrary Will or Pleasure, is to represent him as a Tyrant, or something worse; it is to destroy the Properties of the Divine Decree, which necessarily is of a Felicifying peaceful Nature, and can only require of Man to turn himself to God with Obedience, Humility and Love.

V. *who it is punished by.*

V. But tho' God do's not positively punish, the Condition of Sinners is not better, nor will they be less punish'd: They punish themselves as much or more, and by forsaking God subject themselves to all Sort of *Subjects of the Divine Justice.*



Unmixt Evils; it being impossible for 'em, when confined to the Dungeon of Misery and Evil, to enjoy the least Ray of Good: To this God's Justice do's indeed indirectly consent, by establishing this Rule, that *the Lot of every one shall be according as he chuses*. If therefore Man become a Sufferer, it is only an Effect of his own Choice and free Establishment, because as the Prophet speaks \* *they chuse their own ways*, and voluntarily leave that Object which alone can satisfy the Desire and Sensibility of their Nature. Herein the Punishment of Sin consists, in which we can conceive God to be no otherwise concerned, then either wholly to take it away, or to give way to its Event, or suspend its Effects, that the Sinner may have time to consider and turn: Without which Suspension, the World would have become a Hell, as it will hereafter at the great Day of Separation.

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\* Isa. 66.

VI. When I speak of pure and unmixt Evil, I do not mean that it subsists by itself alone, without a Real Substance: This is contradictory and absurd: Evil is only the Depravation or Indisposition of a Real Subject, and could it exist separate from a Real Substance, would exist without a State of Indisposition, *i. e.* Evil would not be Evil, which is absurd. When then I speak of Evil its being left to itself hereafter, my Meaning is, that no relative Goods, or Perfections, no Divine Gifts and Graces, consisting in the Harmony and Relation of the Light and joy Divine with Man, will be found in that Real Subject, to which Evil do's belong. This and other Difficulties like it, are only from an Ambiguity of Terms. or rather from a Carelessness to determine with a Mathematical Exactness, the Use and meaning of the Terms, *Good, Evil, Natural, Corrupt, Perfect, Imperfect, Happiness, Misery*, and the like; which have not hitherto been sufficiently distinguish'd by any, nor is it necessary to do it nicely, except on an occasion like to this.

It hath been often said that we ought carefully to distinguish two Sorts of Gifts made by God to Man, Absolute and Relative, founded on a Divine Relation or Agreement of one Thing with another, or with a certain Disposition of a Subject.

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Absolute Gifts are those which compose the Nature of a Subject, as the Soul and Body, or Faculties of either. Which Things considered in themselves, should, properly speaking, not be call'd Good or Evil or things Good or Corrupt; but rather, *real and Natural*, and what we thus consider we should distinguish by the Names of Reality and Nature. The Relative are the Objects of the Faculties Corporeal and Divine, *viz.* God and his Works which are objectively united to Man's Faculties, and are what we call his *Felicity*, Supreme, or Accessory, which fully enjoy'd is call'd *Perfection*; but partially or in Part, *Imperfection*, and the Immediate effect or Result of Good is *Happiness* and Joy.

But when the Faculties or Natural Realities are separate from their Objects, herein consists the Formality of *Evil*; because being made to be united with their Objects, Separation from them necessarily renders them indisposed and Irregular, and the Subject to which they do belong, *Evil* and *Corrupt*, as when a Being whose Members are dislocated, or put into a Situation contrary to the Operation of Certain Objects, for whose Impressions they are design'd, the Immediate Effect hereof is *Misery*. And hence one may deduce new Definitions of Names, and Things, and of their Effects, useful to prevent many Paralogisms which, the most Subtile Spirits are too often guilty of, but this I leave to such as desire to distinguish their Notions of them.

Nor is it difficult to conceive how Evil may subsist without any Mixture of Good. We use indeed to say that *Evil cannot subsist, but in a Subject that is good*; but this Scheme of Speech is very perplexed. Evil and Good are contrary to each other and cannot subsist together, but according to the Rules of Logick expel each other, especially when one Predominates. Indeed, in the room of this Word *Good* we use to substitute a Notion that is just; but to speak with Propriety we ought to say, that *Evil can subsist only in a Real Subject, or a Nature that is Real, and that it may subsist therein without any Mixture of Good*; which as we may easily comprehend, so experience confirms

it in the Devils, whose Nature I would call simply *real*, and not good, or much less perfect. To contend (as Metaphysicians do) that All Beings are naturally good, is to dispute about Chimeras, not knowing what one says. We have naturally a Capacity to be good, or Faculties to admit it; but we are not naturally such before our Faculties are united to their proper Objects.

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I freely own, that I myself have not observed always these Definitions or different Names of Things, having I believe more then once given the Names of Good or Perfection to simple Reality, and that of Reality to true Goods and Perfections: it is thus Men use to speak, and 'tis necessary sometimes to conform to Custom. But this Caution is sufficient to guard my Reader against Error, and to screen me from the Suspicion of giving occasion to it, tho' I have, or may hereafter use Words in their Common Sense, without staying to free 'em from Equivocalness by nice Distinctions.

VII. But I will conclude this Treatise with four VII. *Con-*  
Truths, referring to what I have said. *clusion of*

1. That the *Reality* or *Nature* of Things is from *this Tre-*  
God the Father, by his Power and Will. *atise.*

2. That their *Good* and *Perfection* is from God the Son, or the Light and Beauty of the Word Divine, and the Relation or Union of Things with them.

3. That their *Happiness* is from God the Holy Spirit, and the Unitive, Living, intimate Relation of Things with him who is the Source of Happiness, Divine Conduct, Joy, Communion, Conservation, good Order, and Agreement.

4. That *Corruption* is from Liberty, *Evil* and *Misery* from the Disapplying ourselves from the Light and Principle of that Happiness for which we are created, to which sad and deplorable Estate we have seen Things reduced by the Sole default of Man.

\* God made not Death, neither hath he Pleasure in \* Will.  
the Destruction of the Living: For he created all Cb. 1. v.  
Things that they might have their Being: And the 13. Ec.  
Generations of the World are preserved, and there  
is no Poison of Destruction in them, and the King-  
dom



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XVIII.

dom of Hell is not upon the Earth. For Righteousness is immortal; but Unrighteousness bringeth Death. And the ungodly have called it to them both with their Hands and Works; and while they think to make it their Friend, they come to nought; for they are Confederate with it, therefore are they worthy to be Partakers thereof. \* By one Man Sin entred into the World, and Death by Sin: And so Death passed upon all Men, for that all have Sinned.

\* Rom.

5. 12.

F I N I S.



# E R R A T A.

| Page. | Line.     | Errata.                 | Correct thus.                  |
|-------|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|
| 6.    | 17.       | <i>a Man</i>            | <i>O Man</i>                   |
| 8.    | 42.       | <i>indeed with</i>      | <i>indued with</i>             |
| 12.   | 28.       | <i>inferiour</i>        | <i>interiour</i>               |
| 14.   | 31.       | <i>by its</i>           | <i>by his</i>                  |
| 18.   | 25.       | :                       | ,                              |
| ibid. | Marg.     |                         | <i>Prudentius.</i>             |
| 21.   | 8.        | <i>irrestibly</i>       | <i>irresistibly</i>            |
| ibid. | 23.       | <i>our Note</i>         | <i>our Notice</i>              |
| 24.   | 16.       | <i>acting</i>           | <i>from acting</i>             |
| 28.   | 14.       | <i>power</i>            | <i>poorer</i>                  |
| 29.   | Marg. 16. | <i>preserving</i>       | <i>presenting</i>              |
| 32.   | 5.        | <i>dispers'd</i>        | <i>dispens'd</i>               |
| 35.   | 22.       | <i>Graces</i>           | <i>Grace</i>                   |
| ibid. | M.22.     | <i>and ruins</i>        | <i>ruins</i>                   |
| 49.   | Marg.     | <i>add</i>              | <i>Iſa. 65. 16. 55. 10.</i>    |
| 57.   | 40.       | <i>relieve</i>          | <i>realize</i>                 |
| 58.   | 16.       | <i>moral</i>            | <i>model</i>                   |
| 74.   | 20.       | <i>of Sins</i>          | <i>Sins of</i>                 |
| 91.   | 4.        | <i>VI.</i>              | <i>X.</i>                      |
| 92.   | 21.       | <i>of Man</i>           | <i>of the Angel</i>            |
| 93.   | 30.       | <i>Actiivy</i>          | <i>Activity</i>                |
| 99.   | 7.        | <i>escape</i>           | <i>escaped</i>                 |
| 110.  | Last.     | <i>Monsieur</i>         | <i>Mlle</i>                    |
| 112.  | 13.       | <i>converse</i>         | <i>converses</i>               |
| 117.  | 16.       | <i>Inferiour</i>        | <i>Interior</i>                |
| 121.  | 5.        | <i>till when</i>        | <i>till then</i>               |
| ibid. | 36.       | <i>faculty</i>          | <i>faculties</i>               |
| 125.  | 2.        | <i>then after</i>       | <i>thereafter</i>              |
| ibid. | Marg.     | <i>Theologian</i>       | <i>Theologien</i>              |
| 131.  | 13.       | <i>Akempis</i>          | <i>à Kempis</i>                |
| ibid. | 38.       | <i>God's</i>            | <i>Gods</i>                    |
| 136.  | 26.       | <i>united to,</i>       | <i>united to it,</i>           |
| ibid. | 36.       | <i>dele of Liberty,</i> |                                |
| 140.  | Marg.     |                         | <i>Hos. 13. 9. Jer. 2. 19.</i> |
| 142.  | Marg.     |                         | <i>Rom. 5. 12. and 8. 20.</i>  |
| 143.  | 8.        | <i>extends</i>          | <i>extended</i>                |
| 144.  | 37.       | <i>then, after</i>      | <i>thereafter,</i>             |
| ibid. | 39.       | <i>dele any</i>         |                                |
| 146.  | 1.        | <i>acts</i>             | <i>asks,</i>                   |
| 147.  | 35.       | <i>Principle it</i>     | <i>Principle. It</i>           |
| ibid. | 37.       | <i>about the</i>        | <i>a Bent and</i>              |

# E R R A T A.

| Page. | Line. | Errata.               | Correct thus.             |
|-------|-------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| 152.  | 24.   | <i>three ways</i>     | <i>two ways</i>           |
| ibid. | 29.   | <i>God cannot</i>     | <i>we cannot</i>          |
| 154.  | Marg. | <i>Ch. 2.</i>         | <i>and above, Ch. 2.</i>  |
| 155.  | 8.    | <i>part,</i>          | <i>part of,</i>           |
| ibid. | 32.   | <i>second. Med</i>    | <i>second Med</i>         |
| 163.  | 41.   | <i>desire to</i>      | <i>desire to</i>          |
| 164.  | 21.   | <i>is more</i>        | <i>is more or less</i>    |
| 166.  | 10.   | <i>convince of</i>    | <i>shew</i>               |
| 167.  | Marg. | <i>dele 4 Acts</i>    |                           |
| 171.  | 19.   | <i>every Man.</i>     | <i>every one</i>          |
| 172.  | 35.   | <i>draw his</i>       | <i>draw right</i>         |
| 175.  | 39.   | <i>unto God</i>       | <i>unto Man</i>           |
| 178.  | 2.    | <i>a Love</i>         | <i>the Love</i>           |
| ibid. | Marg. | <i>Ch. VII.</i>       | <i>Ch. VIII.</i>          |
| 179.  | 2. 3. | <i>any Creatures</i>  | <i>My Creature</i>        |
| ibid. | 33.   | <i>place</i>          | <i>place</i>              |
| 180.  | 16.   | <i>faultiness</i>     | <i>faultiness</i>         |
| 181.  | Marg. | <i>Renunciation</i>   | <i>Renovation</i>         |
| ibid. | 19.   | <i>take no notice</i> | <i>take notice</i>        |
| 183.  | 11.   | <i>dele .</i>         |                           |
| 184.  | Marg. | <i>objections</i>     | <i>objection</i>          |
| ibid. | 20.   | <i>dele not</i>       |                           |
| 185.  | 40.   | <i>Malicious</i>      | <i>a Malicious</i>        |
| 186.  | 4.    | <i>committed</i>      | <i>communicated</i>       |
| ibid. | 11.   | <i>are naturally</i>  | <i>are, are naturally</i> |
| ibid. | 20.   | <i>dele .</i>         |                           |
| ibid. | Marg. | <i>objections</i>     | <i>objection.</i>         |
| 191.  | 1.    | <i>plac'd</i>         | <i>place</i>              |
| 200.  | Marg. | <i>add</i>            | <i>Entret. pag. 359.</i>  |



THE  
OECONOMY

OF

*Universal Providence*

FOR THE

SALVATION of all MEN.

Where is also demonstrated

The Nullity of the Doctrine of  
Modern Predestination :

AND

That the Reasons and Passages of Scripture  
alleged to prove it, do by no means  
do it.

With the Analysis and short Explication of  
St. PAUL's Epistle to the ROMANS.

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By *PETER POIRET*.

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# T O T H E R E A D E R.



HIS Treatise of Providence, which is the last of the *Divine Oeconomy*, may pass for a compleat Piece by it self and independent on the rest, upon the Subject of the Universality of Grace, but for some References that are necessary when we have a mind to descend from the general to particular Instances. I have endeavour'd to dis-

pose my Subject in as methodical and close a Manner as possible. Of the three Parts, of which this Treatise consists, the first and the principal is that of *Providence*, which I consider under three Periods, before the Fall, during the Fall, and after the Fall of Man (Chap. I, II, III.) and I have subdivided this last into three Parts, as I have consider'd the *Divine Providence* either in the *Idea* of God, in his Prescience and Prevision (Chap. IV.) or in the *Actuation*, or actual Care he takes of Mankind in their Root *Adam*, or in his Children; as well such of them as are resolvedly wicked, as *Cain*; or such as are holy and regenerate, as *Abel*; or such as are between these two States, as the common Sort of *Seth's* Posterity; and lastly, such Bodies as are made up of People of all Sorts, or States and Empires (Chap. V, VI, VII, VIII, IX.) and for the third Branch of my Subdivision I have spent a Chapter (X.) to consider the same Providence, as it hath declar'd it self by *Words*, that is to say, by Prophecies and Predictions.

Men commonly confine their Considerations of Providence only to the time after the Fall of Man, and yet this Fall is but an Incident merely accidental and contingent to the Design and Conduct of the Divine Providence. This Restriction to a Matter and State so obscure as is that of Sin and Sinners, has render'd Men wholly incapable to frame just Conceptions of the Providence of God, which may be seen in its natural and bright Colours, when we



look on it in the Purity of its own Element, which is the State before the Fall. Hence it is that we ought to fetch the Light that is necessary to pierce into that Darkness that Sin will afterwards raise to perplex both its Ways and the Knowledge of them. This we may assuredly look upon as a very material Observation, and so not slightly run over the first Chapter of this Treatise.

The XIth, XIIth, and XIIIth Chapters make the second Part of this Treatise, which, with the artificial Proofs of this System concerning the Universality of God's Providence and Grace, shews the insuperable Difficulties of the Systems of Particularism, as well Supralapsarian as Sublapsarian; and there I answer the Difficulties that may be objected to mine, the peculiar Characters of which is this, to assert God's *Grace*, and its impartial *Universality*, and Man's indetermin'd *Liberty*.

The rest of the Chapters make up the last Part of the Treatise, which I end in shewing how pernicious the System of the Pelagians, with all their Universality is (Chap. XVIII.)

The XIVth Chapter contains general Answers, as also some particular Ones to the inartificial Objections that are made from Scripture; and the Three following Chapters XV, XVI, XVII. are design'd not only to explain the IXth Chapter to the *Romans*, which is the great and main Objection, but I also give there the Plan and brief Explication of that whole Divine Epistle, wherein I prove the Truth of all my System of the DIVINE OECONOMY, and give the true Idea of *Christian Divinity*.

As I little esteem Critical Learning, and the Activity of human Reason in the Explication of Scripture; I have endeavour'd here to have recourse to the true Principle of interpreting Scripture, *viz.* the begging the Assistance of God's inward Grace: 'Tis of his Mercy I receiv'd whatever Good I there advance, and without it I had in vain consulted Criticism and human Reason: I should have err'd as well as others that have gone about to explain this Epistle with those poor Helps. There may doubtless some Faults be met with there, owing to my Weakness; but it may be too you may find Commentaries in *Quarto* and *Folio* upon this Epistle, that will less contribute to the true Interpretation of it than that little you will there meet with in Two or Three Sheets.

To make an end of what I have to say upon a Work which this Treatise concludes, I declare, I take those only for competent Judges of it, that have read and understood as well the preceding Treatises as this; and I beg those  
that

that have not done it, to spend their Verdict upon other Matters: besides these two Conditions, I require also that they be Persons of the greatest Sincerity and Impartiality imaginable. I am very sensible this last is a very rare Qualification, and that an impartial Person, one that adheres to no side but that of the Truth, and that readily subscribes to it where-ever scatter'd, among the different Parties, he meets with it, is now a-days a kind of Prodigy. The first thing Men generally ask after in any Matter whatever, is, what Party is he of? To say, one is of the Party of Truth satisfies no body; and yet whatever else Men say or do, signifies just nothing. But it may be every Body is willing to be, and thinks he really is on the side of Truth. Pure Fancy! Men stand out and upon their Guard against all Truth that is not of their own Stamp and profess'd by their own Party: they are asham'd to learn a little too late, and heartily own they have been in an Error tho' to their own Consciences alone, much less to do so publicly and to recant their old Mistakes, especially when they have good Preferments and the Esteem and Kindness of those they dare not offend, annex to them. This makes many wavering and doubling with God stifle the Truth that is springing up in their Heart. Self-love, and Self-approbation, that makes Men fancy themselves Favourites of God, and mighty Proficients in his Secrets, in Knowledge, in Grace, and in a State of Salvation, does no less contribute to this Disposition. We are so hugely pleas'd to rock our selves asleep in these pleasant Dreams and charming Imaginations, that we fear, like Death, to be undeceiv'd and disturb'd by the troublesome Importunity of Truth, that will discover the true Misery and the damnable State we are in. Men are in this Case just like the old Fool we read of, that in his Frenzy fancy'd all the Ships that came to Port, his own, and therefore curs'd the Physicians that took away all his Joys and fancy'd Riches as well as his Disease. Our spiritual Franticks, that count all the Divine Treasures their own, and that say to themselves with so much Pleasure, *The Truth is mine, I keep it, I see clearly into it, I am Rich, and have Abundance, I want for Nothing*; no sooner hear the Truth saying to them, *thou art Blind, thou art Naked and Poor, thou art Wretched and Miserable, and knowest not thy self!* and convincing them of it, but like Madmen they fall upon this galling Light that undeceives them, and not being able to obscure the Lustre of its Rays, they endeavour to turn Men away from it by slandering those that hold it out; and the common Artifice of these Calumniators is to charge others with what they

them-

themselves are guilty of, and to publish to the World that those they have a mind to render odious, rail against all Mankind. They will say the same of me, if they have not already, because declaring again and again against the Learned and Unlearned, the Secular and Ecclesiasticks, I do not in every Line tell them I mean only the Wicked and not the Good. And therefore it is that I declare here again the fifth or sixth and last Time (and I desire all good Men to remember it) that I think there are in all States of Men, Learned, Clergy, and others, still left many sincere, generous and honest Souls, whom I love and honour, and would gladly serve with the last drop of my Blood ; and that I intend not to make so gross a Medley as to confound them with the Wicked, against whose Sins I freely declar'd my self; nor ever thought the Good would have look'd upon themselves as concern'd in such Reproofs : I think the whole Body and all the Parts of my Work sufficiently manifest that the Good alone are the only Persons I value upon Earth, and my chief Treasure, in whatever Party, Sect, or Place of the World they are to be found ; much more when to their Probity they have added large Measures and the good Use of Learning, and are in Places and Charges that are of themselves Honourable : If you meet here some hard Words against some Things or Opinions that are common to some of both sorts, 'tis because they are likewise common to the Wicked and Opinionative, that would perniciously keep up the Abuse and Falsity of them against the Truth, and then 'tis but just to speak to such sometimes in such Fashion, as the Good, that implicitly love the Truth though unknown, and heartily embrace it when discover'd to them, should not take to themselves. But if this will not yet satisfy some good Men, who after all will think themselves offended by the Refutation of some of their Opinions, I conjure them by the good Will I had to serve them, or rather for the Love of God, to pardon this my Imperfection, and to pray God to forgive me too all my other Sins against his Love and the Love of my Neighbour. Nor will I for my part forget to recommend them to the Mercy of the Lord. *Amen.*





THE  
OECONOMY  
OF  
*Universal Providence*  
FOR THE  
Salvation of all MEN.

---

CHAP. I.

*Of the Divine Providence for the Salvation of Man before the Fall. Five things provided by it. A fundamental Explication of what the Communication of God to Creatures is, what real Causes, what occasional Causes are; what God's Concourse, what the Generality, the Simplicity, Impartiality and Singularity of the Rules, of the Ways, Acts, and Election of God towards intelligent Creatures are.*

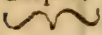
I.



DESIGN, by God's Help, to treat of three things in this Book; the *First*, how God intending to save all Men, has on his Part so provided that all may be saved. The *Second*, how false, unjust and absurd that Doctrine is that teaches, that God has made particular

Decrees to save only some Men, and that he wills the rest should perish. The *Third*, that the little Reason-

I. *The Scope of this Treatise.*

**Chap. I.**  ings Men use, and the Passages of Scripture they alledge to support this strange Doctrine, do nothing less than confirm it. I will begin with the first, and will always endeavour to demonstrate things in their Sources, for when we once see them plainly there, all the Truths that depend on them become very easie and clear.

**II. God**  
*having created all Men for Salvation, has constituted such Rules, and provided such Means, as all may be sav'd by*

II. God's Design in the Creation of intelligent Beings, was to express in them his own Image, to communicate to them himself, his Justice, his Light, and his Joy; himself, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that is to say, he created them to save 'em, or to make 'em happy. This Design of God you may take for an undoubted and certain Truth, and if you seek the Proof of it, you need but consult the last Chapter of the Oeconomy of the Creation.

Now then it being the Part of Wisdom, much more of infinite Wisdom, to appoint such Rules and Means by which the End propos'd may be perfectly attain'd, God has doubtless pitch'd upon such Rules and Ways as will enable all intelligent Creatures, or all Men (who are more particularly our present Subject) to attain eternal Life, without excluding, or indeed without all Possibility any one of 'em should be excluded, from any Defect in the Means made use of by God.

**III. Three**  
*Periods of Divine Providence, or three sorts of Providences.*

III. The better to comprehend this important Truth we must consider it with respect to the three Estates of Man, viz. to that before his Sin, at the committing of Sin, and after Sin. We shall see, if it please God, how his divine Power, Wisdom and Goodness have by Rules and Means perfect and proportion'd to their needs universally provided that all might be saved. And so we come to consider in God three sorts of Providence, each perfect and universal. The *First* before, the *Second* at, the *Third* after the Fall.

**IV.**  
*Shelves to be avoided, and the way we are to take.*

IV. To comprehend the following Truths perfectly well, we must free our Minds of abundance of Chimeras some new Philosophers have been pleas'd to invent, to explain the Ways of God in such a manner as makes it necessary that many should be lost. They say, that God intending to accomplish his Design (of saving all Men) by the most simple Ways, the Simplicity of these Ways would not suffer all to be saved. That is, that the

the Goodness, Wisdom and Simplicity of God do contradict one another; that his Charity is either weak, or foolish and indiscreet. In a Word, that God's Attributes are at Variance among themselves. Men have talk'd, some of an universal and particular *Concourse*, others of the *Cause real*, others of *Causes occasional*, of their Rules and Ways *simple, uniform, general, singular, particular*, with such Darkeness, that without troubling my self to clear up this Chaos, I advise my Reader (as I do) to throw them all on a heap together and leave 'em, and to apply himself to the Consideration of these things as originally and as near their Spring-Head as possible. We shall by that Means, I hope, derive Light enough to see the beautiful Order of God's *Providence*, and to affix clear Ideas to these dark and intricate Terms, if ever we have occasion to make use of them in our ensuing Discourse. We will begin, and proceed by degrees.

V. God, a Being active, and infinitely free, bright and delicious, wills there should be other Beings besides himself, to partake of what he is, and be happy as he is. This is God's Design. This Happiness consists in the Possession of the Light and Joys of God: For God himself is not happy but in the Possession of himself; he finds no other Happiness but himself.

That another Being besides God may be happy, 'tis necessary there be. *First*, another Being besides God. *Secondly*, That it be not in the Power of this other Being to make or cause its own Happiness of it self, or with it self. *Thirdly*, That a beatifying Object be presented to this Being. *Fourthly*, That this same Being have not only a Power positively to admit, but also in a manner to cause or occasion, if you please, the Admission of the beatifying Object. *Fifthly* and lastly, That this beatifying Object shall act upon this Being in Proportion to its Reception of it into it self.

VI. If the Properties of God or his Attributes were incommunicable, God could not make any thing out of himself. For Being, Activity, Power. Understanding and Liberty being things that do properly belong to God, it would follow, that besides God, nothing could

V. *The Aim of Providence. Five things it ought to provide to attain this End.*

VI. *The first of these Requisites, a Being different from God. Whether in God*



Chap. I. be or act, perceive, will or determine it self. But this is against Experience. Therefore there is something in God that is communicable. But on the other Hand, Men are afraid, lest by asserting that what is in God may be communicated to other Beings besides himself, they should rob God of his Glory, or at least should change the Creatures into God. What must be done in this Case, on one hand, not to annihilate, on the other, not to divinise the Creatures? Must we betake our selves to the Distinction commonly made of God's Attributes, or of things that are in God, into communicable and incommunicable? This Distinction is obscure, and indeed false, as 'tis commonly propos'd. For the Attributes that are commonly reckon'd amongst the incommunicable ones, as Power (according to some) Infinity, Eternity, (*sano sensu & ceteris paribus*) are as communicable as the other. Yet 'tis certain, 'tis necessary to make some such Distinction, if we take it right, but then we must take it in another Sense than is commonly given of it, tho' in Words it be the same. I will give the true ground of this Distinction.

VII. Two  
sorts of  
Communications, the  
subjective  
and the  
objective.

VII. It must be noted that there are two sorts of Communications; the one whereof we may call *subjective*, the other *objective*. Let not these Terms affright you, I can light on no other to make the Truth plain, and nothing but a false Delicacy, or a Neglect of the most important Truths can make us reject 'em, seeing I intend to explain them so clearly that they shall easily be understood.

I call that a *Subjective Communication*, by which a thing whereof another partakes, is or becomes a Part of the Subject that partakes it. For Example. When I say, that Being, Life, Activity, Understanding and Will are communicated to me, I call this Communication subjective, because Being, Life, and the rest, make a part of my Nature, and are a part of the Subject my self.

I call that an *Objective Communication*, by which a thing whereof another partakes, is not nor does become a Part of its Nature, but is the Object of it, about which it is to be conversant, which is to fill it and perfect it. As for Example. when the Light of the Sun, or which is more, when the Divine Light is communicated

nicated to me, I call this Communication objective, Chap. I. because the Light, especially the Divine, which is the Son of God, is no Part of my Nature, but only the Object of it, an in-dwelling and interiour Object; 'tis true, but not natural or essential. I am confident there are none but easily enough comprehend my Meaning.

VIII. When therefore 'tis demanded, whether the Things or Attributes of God are communicable? This Question admits two Senses, a subjective and an objective. I shall take it in the first Sense. I demand therefore, whether the things that are in God are subjectively communicable to any thing else but God?

I answer, they must needs be communicable; otherwise Creatures would be a meer nothing, incapable to participate any thing divine, even Objectively, which none will say. For I am persuaded, without renouncing all Reason no Man can hold, that God cannot become the Object of a Creature. But unless the Creature did communicate or partake subjectively of Being and Understanding, it could not communicate of the Divine Object. But these Properties, Being, Intellect and Will are originally in God alone. Therefore what is in God is communicable by a subjective Communication.

IX. But if it were so with all things that are in God, the Creature would be, or become subjectively God; in as much as all that is in God would be natural and essential to it. Here we must yet make a notable Distinction. I call it a *notable* one, to inculcate to you, that you are not here to expect frivolous and ridiculous Distinctions, as are most of those of the Schools. I treat here of the most solid and fundamental Notions in the World, and such as are inexhaustible Springs of Truths most important and of most general Use.

X. There are in God three kinds of Things or Relations, or Attributes, or Realities, or lastly, what you please to call them. The *First* are those we consider in the Divinity as a Subject or Ground which receives or admits something; such are, for Example, Being, and being Free, Power, Activity, Sensibility, Desire, the Faculties of Understanding and Acquiescing, and the like; which are directly referr'd to the *Father*. The *Second* are as it were the Objects of Lights presented

VIII.

*There are things in God subjectively communicable to others than himself.*

IX. *There are likewise in God things subjectively incommunicable to others.*

X. *Three sorts of things to be consider'd in God. The Sacred Trinity.*

Chap. I. to these first, and these are the bright Splendors of the Divinity or the *Son of God*. The *Third* are the substantial Emotions that result from the Union of what is subjective with what is objective in the Divinity; from the Union of the Faculties (as I may say) of God with their Object, or of the Father with the Son; and these are the substantial Joys and Delights of the Divinity, or the Holy Ghost.

XI. *The things of the Father are communicable subjectively; those of the Son and Holy Ghost objectively.*

XI. Upon this Supposition, I say, that the things, Properties or Attributes of the first Order only are subjectively communicable to other things than God; that is to say, that God the Father may, if he pleases, cause to flow from his Being and Attributes, Emanations of Being and of Properties of the same Nature with his own, which become Parts of the Nature, or rather the very Nature of the Creature. I need not further prove or explain this. You may please to remember what has been said in the first Treatise, how the Soul of Man took its Birth and Origin from the Nature of God the Father. And this is plain of it self, there being no Body but knows the Soul of Man partakes subjectively of Being, Liberty, Faculties of Desire, of Understanding and Enjoying or Acquiescing, which are of the first Rank, or the subjective ones of the Divinity.

But it is not thus with the objective ones, the perfecting or beatifying ones, which are the Properties of the Son and Holy Spirit. 'Tis certain, if the Soul partakes of them, if they are communicable to it, 'tis only objectively, and not in a subjective manner; seeing 'tis plain the Light of the Son of God, or the Joys of the Holy Ghost are no Parts of the Nature of a human Soul, no more than the Properties of the Father consider'd as united to the Word and Spirit, in which Sense 'tis the Apostle says, *he that has not the Son, has not the Father neither*. His Properties as consider'd in Separation or Distinction from those of the Son and Holy Spirit, are the only communicable ones to the Creature subjectively.

XII. *The first of the above-nam'd*

XII. By this God has furnish'd the first thing necessary to his Design (a); by which he intending to

*Requisites communicated subjectively, and provided by Providence. (a) § 5.*



to make something happy besides himself, has provided and made really to exist other Beings by the subjective Communication of himself, consider'd as a Subject receiving Light and Happiness, that so there might be another Subject receiving or capable to receive Light and Happiness as himself does. Chap. I.

Now this is what Divine Providence has equally and impartially communicated to every Man, or to every thing that should or could be born of Man. All Men, as to their Nature, do from their Origin partake of all the Properties of the Father, known and unknown. They have all Being, Liberty, Activity, Power, and the Faculty of Understanding, with the rest. In a Word, they all have whatever is necessary to make them Subjects capable of lodging an infinite and eternal Happiness, none excepted.

XIII. Great and wonderful things they are that God might communicate, and really did to Man; they are all the living and subjective Emanations of the Nature of the Father, *whose Race and Offspring we are* (a); and 'tis prodigious Blindness in our new Philosophers (the *Malebranchists*) to deny that the Creatures have truly in them a Principle of Activity and Power; and especially to deny this of Man, that subjectively has in his Nature all the Properties and Attributes of the Father by the true Communication that God has made of them to him, excepting (and this is plain of it self) his absolute and eternal Independence, and the Production (I do not say a Capacity to receive, but the Production) of the Son and Holy Ghost. For it is flat Contradiction and Impossibility for Man to receive absolute Independence, or for him to depend and not depend; and for God, the Son and Holy Spirit to be produc'd by Man.

XIII. Excepting Independence and the Production of the Word and Holy Spirit; Man possesses by a subjective Communication all the Properties of the Father.

(a) Acts 17. 28, 29;

XIV. But God may, excepting that, communicate subjectively all the rest to Man, as the Faculties of acting, of Self-Preservation or Duration in Being, and even the Faculty of making other Beings different from the Sovereign Being. I touch again these Matters to confirm and clear the Ideas I have given in the first Treatise, as likewise to give clear Notions of the Terms of *Causality, Production and Concourse*. It being God's Design to represent himself as he is, and it being

XIV. Man participates subjectively of durable, active and productive Being.

Chap. I. impossible to do this but by communicating to things out of himself subjectively what he possesses as Father, distinguish'd from the Son and Holy Ghost; he must, upon Supposition of this his good Pleasure, as having in himself a durable Subsistence (I cannot express it better) Power and Activity, and the Faculty to produce his like (his beloved Son) communicate likewise to Man (our present Subject) a Principle of lasting Subsistence, of a powerful Activity, and of making or producing Beings like himself.

XV. *Nor is this an Act of Choice in him, but natural.*

XV. Only we must take notice, that as these things are not in God after one and the same manner, so likewise neither are they in Man after one and the same manner by God's Communication of them to him. Firm and lasting Subsistence is not in God by way of Choice and Freedom, but by Nature. 'Tis so likewise as to the Faculty of durable and self-preserving Subsistence in an intelligent Being, it is not in it by way of Act, much less by way of voluntary and free Act of the Creature, but 'tis in it by Nature, that is to say, because it is of the Nature and Constitution of a Being issuing from God, and made to represent God, not to tend to nothing, but to subsist always in the natural and subjective State wherein God has once put it, without needing continually God's assisting Hand effectually to reproduce it every Moment of its Duration.

XVI. *The natural Concourse of the Schools, the continual Reproduction of the Cartesians and Malebranchists are Chimeras.*

XVI. So that there is nothing more false or fanciful than the *natural Concourse* invented by the Schoolmen, or the *continual Reproduction* of *Cartesianism*, but more especially that of *Malebranchism*, that generally extends this mysterious Reproduction or continual Creation not only to the Duration of Subjects, but also to the Reality of their Acts. A pleasant Thought this, to fancy the most Divine Productions of God, such as are of the same Nature with himself, do by their Constitution tend to nothing, that God must be always assisting his Hand to them again, continually exciting and reproducing the Acts of Creatures, even of such of 'em as are in a criminal and an abominable State! But let us keep to things in their natural State.

XVII. These

XVII. These Mistakes proceed from Mens con-  
 founding Nature with Grace, and the subjective State  
 of things with their objective, as I may so say. As  
 Man is not the Cause of his Happiness, viz. of the Word  
 of God, nor of his Holy Spirit, 'tis evident, that to be  
 happy, or in a State of Grace, God as luminous and  
 happy must unite himself to the Faculties and Acts of  
 Man by an Act of Union on his Part, and that this Act  
 of Union of God must not only answer one Part of the  
 present Acts of Man, but continually to all the subse-  
 quent ones; and so God must concur continually by  
 the Light of his Son, and Peace of his Holy Spirit,  
 with the succeeding and current Acts of Man. This  
 is the true Concourse of God, whose Presence and in-  
 deed *Precourse* or Prevention is so absolutely necessary,  
 that without it the whole World would be nothing but  
 a Company of *Pelagians* and damn'd Persons. But to  
 ascribe this or any thing like it to the Subsistence of the  
 subjective and natural Realities of a Subject is meer  
 Childishness and Ignorance. There is something like  
 this in corporeal Nature, if we consider its subjective  
 Realities on one side, and its objective on the other;  
 which are the Order and Light. But this is not a Place  
 to examine these things to the bottom.

XVIII. As to the Activity and Power that God has  
 communicated subjectively to Man, Man is by them  
 become, and really is the *true* and proper Cause of his  
 own Acts; because the *formal Reason* of Causality is af-  
 ter a subjective manner in him. The *formal Reason* of  
 Causality consists in this, that a thing has within it self  
 a Power and Virtue, which being put in act, there ne-  
 cessarily follows something else from such Actuation of  
 its Power, and so necessarily, that unless such Effect  
 did follow upon it, there would be Contradiction or  
 Repugnance in such Cause, which by Supposition,  
 would have within it self such Virtue, and would actu-  
 ally exert it, and yet would not actually have such  
 Virtue as the Event would manifest. For Example;  
 supposing God that is a Being powerful and perfect,  
 should actually will the Existence of something differ-  
 ent from himself; if this thing should not exist upon  
 his willing the Existence of it, there would be Contra-  
 diction in God, for in this Case the Will of a Being  
 that

XVII. The  
 Source of  
 these Chi-  
 mera's. The  
 Truth and  
 Necessity of  
 the true  
 Concourse  
 of God, nay  
 and of his  
 Precourse,  
 or prevent-  
 ing Con-  
 course.

XVIII.  
 Man is  
 truly and  
 properly  
 the Cause  
 of his own  
 Acts. The  
 formal  
 Reasons of  
 Causality.  
 The first  
 and second  
 Causes.



Chap. I. that has Power would be the Will of a Being that had not Power. Therefore to avoid such Contradiction the thing must exist and necessarily follow in Virtue and Consequence of this Will, and so the Divine Will is a real and true Cause of 'em. This Necessity and effectual and consecutive Connexion between the one of these things and the other, is as plain as any thing in the World. So again, supposing it was the Will of God there should flow from all his subjective Realities a Subject that should represent him; it follows in virtue of this Divine Will and Production as from a *first Cause*, that when this Subject wills to dispose of any thing (in matter of its Acts) these Effects will follow in Virtue and Consequence of the Will of this Subject, as from an *emanated* constituted and *Second Cause*; for otherwise, the Subject would not be of an emanated Nature, participating of the subjective Properties of the Divinity; it would not represent the Activity and Power of God; which is contradictory to the Will of God. So that Man is truly and formally the real Cause of his natural Acts. I shall say something by and by of *occasional Causes* under which have lately been cover'd abundance of Chimera's. We shall only remark upon occasion of real Causes, that as the Principle of Activity and Power is in God naturally and not of Choice, and that 'tis the Exercise and Disposal of his Acts only that is in him arbitrarily and by Election, so it is likewise as to Man.

XIX. *Why Man is free to produce his like, and God not.*

XIX. It is not altogether so in the Parallel between the productive Faculty and the actual Production, that are in God and Man. The Necessity and Reason of this Disparity is this; God being most perfect and his own proper and necessary Happiness, he must of Necessity actually and continually produce his like. But Man not being able to produce God, who is the true Happiness; nor being himself, nor his Likeness, his own Happiness, it follows, that the Production of his like, much less the continual Production of it, is not necessary, but only accessary to his Happiness, and so free and of Choice as to the Act; for the Faculty is natural to him,

XX. You

XX. You see here the Subject which the Divine Providence (taking the Word in a very large Signification) has prepar'd to execute his Design on, of having other Beings to make happy as God. Here I would wish Men to remove a Scruple which I think has not yet perfectly been done, *viz.* why God does not annihilate the wretched Souls of the Damnd, rather than suffer them to continue in that dreadful State; I could wish Men would heedfully take Notice of what has been said of the continual Duration of the Soul, that it is subjective, natural and necessary to it, by a divine and original Necessity. I do not say that God necessarily created the Soul, but that God intending to create the Soul by an arbitrary (and subjective) Communication of his divine Nature, and being pleas'd to produce it such, that it might be a lively Emanation and Resemblance of himself, it must necessarily be of an immortal Nature, contrary to what many, and even the *Catholics* themselves, think; and I my self once thought too. These Gentlemen are of Opinion, that the Reason of the continual Duration or Immortality of the Soul does so depend on the free Pleasure of God, that supposing the Soul to continue still of the same Nature it originally is; yet God might have will'd to have it mortal, and at last actually to cease to be; and that now there needs nothing but his Will to annihilate it. But this is false and contradictory. For if God could destroy a Soul, he might make the divine Nature whence the Soul proceeds, and whereof it is an Emanation and subjectively partakes, perishable and mortal; that is to say, not divine. He might also make what he design'd as the lively Representation of what he himself is, to be no such Representation. Things that are visibly contradictory.

XX. The Soul of Man is naturally and necessarily immortal. How God cannot annihilate it.

XXI. But yet we are not to imagine that any thing said here tends directly or indirectly to deny or call in question God's Power. For the Power of God does not consist formally in being able to contradict himself, and the Effects and Terms of it are not Destruction, but Reality and Position; or at most but a Negation or Retraction of objective Realities, and such as are offer'd conditionally, and not of subjective Realities that are given without all Condition. I would say, that

XXI. Wherein the destructive Power of God consists. It does not respect the Natures or Substances of things.

Chap. I. that the Terms and Effects of Power are not to destroy the Natures of things, but that God having presented to these Natures his Light and Happiness as Objects to act in the Soul, on Condition the Soul be willing to turn towards them her Faculties and Acts; what God's Power can do here in Matter of Diminution of Realities, is, not to destroy Nature. but to withdraw and deny the Continuation of the Offer of the brightening and beatifying Object, upon which the Creature will be eternally and infinitely miserable. 'Tis this Consideration that ought to make the Creature fear the destructive Power of God, which destructive Power of God is yet never actuated on God's Part by a positive Act of Refusal proceeding from him; but by the Fault and Failure of the Soul, which will not receive the Offer of God, to which Failure God can no longer correspond by the Continuation of his Offer without contributing to the Insult and Sin of his Creature, and without contravening his first Design, which was to do nothing in the Soul without its Consent; yet is God so good, so compassionate, and so generous, as I may say, that could Souls be destroy'd by his Power, he would undoubtedly destroy all such as separate themselves from his Happiness. But it is meer Ignorance and Blindness of Spirit to believe this Possibility, and much more to expect it, or to affirm its Futurition, as those wicked Men do, that are seduc'd by the Dotage of Socinus, and give themselves up to Wickedness, or the Forgetfulness of God, upon the wretched and deceitful Hopes of Annihilation.

*The second and third things requisite.*

XXII. (2.) The second thing which I said (a) was to be suppos'd or consider'd in Beings God intended to make happy, is, that these Beings be not able of themselves to make or cause their own Happiness. I have already said enough upon this Article to shew that so it is in respect of Man or the human Soul, and that it cannot be otherwise; it being impossible for Man to produce the infinite Object, which is the true Happiness;

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themselves to make themselves happy. (a) Suprà § 3.



ness : For the eternal, infinite and perfect Object cannot be produc'd by a temporal, finite and imperfect Subject. Nor do all the Acts of a created Subject by any Virtue or necessary Consequence infer (I do not say the Object, but not so much as) the Presence of the Object. For set the whole Soul and all its Faculties on acting as vigorously as you will, nothing will necessarily follow from the Soul alone and all her Acts, but Darkeness, Confusion, and anxious Pains, as I have solidly prov'd in more than one Place of the (a) first Treatise. So that Man is not, nor can be, the true Cause of his Happiness, tho' we should suppose he could cause in himself all sorts of sensible and imaginable Ideas and Delectations, which are indeed but Miseries to a Soul that is capable of an infinite Object, and sensible of its own infinite Emptiness.

XXIII. This Truth confirms and explains that which I (b) touch'd on the Subject of Sin, or the Liability of Man ; who I have shewn could not but be liable to fall ; which is founded, amongst other Considerations, upon this, that he could not be the Cause of his Happiness, or that he could not find his Happiness in his own Nature, in his own Acts, or in the Commerce of himself with himself. This Truth is also the Foundation of that Humility (wherein those Spirits that never sinn'd are constantly before God) and likewise of that not only natural but voluntary and amorous Dependance, whereby the Saints continually submit themselves to the Divine Majesty. I only note by the by the principal Consequences of these radical Truths, and so pass on to the third Consideration upon the Beings which God designs to render happy, and by his Providence to lead to that End.

XXIV. (3.) The Third thing requisite is this, that there be presented to these Beings an Object beatifying, luminous and calming. Now this is what God has done with reference to all created Spirits ; and would have done it with relation to all Men, had he created more, or if Man and his Offspring had not fallen into Sin : For we here consider things before the Fall. This is what I call Preventing Grace, or the Offer of preventing

Chap. I.  
Oecon.  
of the  
Creation,  
Chap. 1.  
§ 29, &c.  
Chap. 8.  
§ 10, &c.  
Chap. 9.  
§ 7, &c.  
Chap 14.  
§ 20, &c.  
and Chap.  
15. §. 17.

XXIII.  
Man could  
not but be  
liable. The  
Humility  
and Depen-  
dence of  
the Saints.

(b) Oecon.  
of Sin,  
Chap. 1.  
§ 5.

XXIV.  
(3.) The  
Third  
thing re-  
quir'd to a  
Subject God  
intends to  
make hap-  
py, the  
beatifying  
Object, or

preventing Grace. This is by God's Providence prepar'd also.

Chap. I.  ting Grace, because it prevents Man's Co operation or Admission, or rather his very seeking of it: I think I have sufficiently treated of this in the Treatises of *Creation*, of *Sin*, and the *Restoration*. So that all I have here to say of it respects only certain Terms commonly us'd in this Matter, tho' very obscurely; which therefore are become very confus'd and perplexing. I will here give you my Explication of them.

XXV. *An Explication of the Terms, of preventing and simultaneous Concourses; of Succour.* XXV. When God presents his Light and his Love to the Soul before her seeking it, this is call'd, *Preventing Grace*, which is the *Præcursor* or *Concursus præivus* of the Schools, which is to be apply'd to Matters of Grace, as has been (a) already noted.

As the Creature could not be lastingly and solidly happy, except this Offer of Grace were made every Moment of its Duration, when God does this, (as he truly does) this is what we call God's *Concurrence*, the (a) Above simple *Concursus*, or *Concursus simultaneous* of the Schoolmen. And this Concurrence has Place, as I said, in Matters of Grace, even before the Fall. And when there is any thing met with that opposes God thus offering himself to Man, and yet God will continue his Offer notwithstanding this Obstacle, this is call'd God's *succouring* of Man; his *Succursus* or *Auxilium* in the Schools.

*The general and simple Rule that God has set himself in this Case.* The Will which God has to offer his Grace and his Happiness, or his Light and his Love to every intelligent Creature, issu'd from him; this Will not being inconstant in God, is call'd a *Rule*; and as respecting all intelligent Beings without exception, may be call'd, the *general, universal*, and, if you please, the *simple Rule*, that God has prescrib'd himself, according to the Tenour whereof he will regulate his Procedure with all his Creatures. I say, these things are in substance the same with regard to all intelligent Creatures (before the Fall) as to their eternal Happiness; that is to say, that the Offer which God has made of his Light and of his Grace to each and every of them, is equally sufficient to make them happy. And when I speak of a *general Act* and *general Way*, I must not be understood of logical and metaphysical Abstractions, „ separate from all Individuality, and hoisted into the wide Air of Universals. The Act of God, by which he offers himself

himself to his Creature, is in God most singular and most individual; but this Singularity and this Individuality is extended and offer'd not only to one individual, but to all and every of them; and so is both a singular and general, an universal and individual Act. The same is to be said of the Ways of this Act. Chap. I.

As there are in the one only Nature of God most perfect and infinite Varieties and Multiplicities, in Conformity to which the Spirits which he has produc'd have in the Fund of one and the same Nature (which they possess) almost infinite Dispositions and Varieties; so, tho' the Action and Manner in which God communicates himself to 'em be the same in substance in respect of 'em all, as to one and the same substantial Happiness, yet this Act may be diversify'd and vary'd in an Infinity of most perfect Ways and Manners, all different and unequal in regard to the different Constitution and Disposition of each Spirit. This we may call the *particular Acts, Gifts and Graces of God.* Particular Acts, Gifts and Graces of God.

Every angelick Mind, and every intelligent Creature, has some of these, which are not in the same manner common to others. But this Diversity makes no essential Difference in the gratuitous Act of God, nor is it opposite to its Generality and Universality, nor to its Identity in relation to the substance of eternal Happiness.

XXVI. Thus has God amply furnish'd the Third thing requir'd to the Subject he intends to make happy, he has, I say, sufficiently provided this Requisite by the Offer of preventing Grace, by his Concourse, by the establishing of a general, universal and simple Rule, by a general and yet singular Act, by universal and yet individual Ways, and likewise by special Gifts and Graces. I know not what more can be desir'd in matter of offering an Object to an intelligent and free Subject. XXVI. The third of the above-nam'd Requisites prepar'd and communicated by God's Providence to the Subjects God designs to save.

XXVII. We have seen in the first Treatise, that God having given to Man not only Faculties purely divine, but also (to say nothing of human Reason and the outward Objects which Providence administers likewise. XXVII. Outward Objects which Providence administers likewise.



Chap. I. the Imagination) a Body and bodily Faculties, he has also presented him with Objects suitable to all these Faculties. Tho' this does not directly belong to Grace and eternal Happiness, yet may it be reduc'd to it, and serves as a means a little more remote than those that are purely divine. They are indirect and secondary ones, or what you please to call them. As these things are to come into Consideration in the Question of divine Providence, and will make a considerable Part of it after the Fall, we must see how the Divine Providence was concern'd in them during Man's Rectitude.

## XXVIII.

*The Corporeal Subject which God gave Man subjectively for his accessory Happiness.*

XXVIII. God to fasten Man more closely and dependently on him, and consequently to render him more easily and accessorily happy, was pleas'd not only to make him what was necessary to render him happy; to wit, a Being purely spiritual and divine, but also to make him what he might not have been, tho' he were happy; I mean, it was his Pleasure to make him a corporeal and material Being. So, he gave to Man subjectively, and as Part of his Nature, a Body, of active bodily Faculties; for the natural Subsistence and continual Duration whereof it is not necessary that God any longer act, preserve and concur by either a continual Communication, Reduplication, or subjective Reproduction, as we have (a) seen that this was not necessary in regard of the Being and Powers of his Soul. It is enough that God once gave these things Being, and that this Act of God tend not to nothing. Hence it must follow that Man's Body, its Activity and Faculties will last for ever.

(a) Above  
§ 16, 17.

## XXIX.

*Man's Body is incapable of producing its accessory Happiness and Blessedness.*

XXIX. Man might touch, and as it were feel his Dependance upon God, by the Existence of his Body, which was not of his own making; but he might yet more do so by the Consideration that his Body alone with all its Activity would have been to him only an Instrument of Pain and Disquiet, if God had not encompass'd it with other Bodies to cherish and support it by their Light, their Beauty, Harmony, and by their benign and kindly Penetrations and Communications; so that Man, besides the Subject of his Body, stood in need of the Objects of a bright and well-order'd World.

Now

Now Man was much less capable of producing such a World, and of giving it Light, Order and Harmony, than he was of producing his own Body. And hence he was advertis'd to look for no such thing from himself, but to cast his Eyes up to God. Chap. I.

XXX. Indeed, it is God alone that can and does present Man with these Objects, I mean, with a beautiful, bright and perfect World. And tho' this World being once created can no more tend to nothing, nor ever cease to be as to its Substance and Matter; yet might the Use, or the general and universal Offer of all that is in it have been refus'd to Man's Body (excepting some small space of it necessary to contain it) if God, the Lord of this World, had not made him the objective and universal Offer of it, as long as his Body lasted. Much more necessary therefore was it that God should concur to present to him this Object in a State of perfect Harmony, Light and Beauty. And indeed it seems the Light, Beauty, Accord, the sweet and benign Influences of Bodies do more need the continual Concourse of God, than the Duration of their Being and Activity consider'd simply and without Order. I will not simply say this was so order'd by God, to call to our Minds the Beauty and Goodness of God, but will endeavour to say something more precise and determinate, tho' what I say will come to the same Consideration.

XXXI. We have said before that God communicated himself to spiritual Creatures, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; as Father, in a subjective manner, in giving them subjectively and as Part of their Nature, Being, Power, Activity, and other Faculties; as Son, in an objective manner, by offering them (as their spiritual and internal Object) his divine Light; and as Holy Ghost, after the same objective manner, in offering them his divine Joys, Accords and Delights; and that these Objects not being in the Creatures as Part of their Nature, must be offer'd them by God's continual Concourse. There is something like this in things corporeal. God has communicated himself to these as Father, as Son, and as Holy Ghost; but after an external, umbratile and gross manner, and which we may call dead in comparison of the spiritual Communication; yet such as is true and indeed wonderful, if we

XXX. The Divine Providence furnishes the corporeal Man with corporeal and beautiful Objects for his accessory Happiness. God's Concourse in things corporeal.

XXXI. God has communicated himself (but after a shadowy manner only) to corporeal Creatures, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

**Chap. I.** well consider it. For it is most true, that all that is in the World, even what is most corporeal, has been made by either the lively or shadowy Communication of the most *Holy Trinity*, and after its Image more or less lively; and the Heresy that denies the adorable Mystery of the Tri-une God is so absurd, that none but blind and brutish Persons devoid of all solid Knowledge of God, of themselves and the Creatures can be led away by it; since every thing carries upon it ineffaceable and bright Marks and Footsteps of this grand Truth, except it may be the damn'd Creatures, of which I do not here speak; but of Creaturs as God made them.

**XXXII.** *This Communication as Father has no need of a reproductive Concourfe in the Objects.* XXXII. Now God has communicated himself in a corporeal and umbratile manner to Bodies, as Father, by the Creation of Matter. Extension, its Activity and its different Motions, Virtues and Powers. And as this Communication is subjective, that is to say, these things belong to the Nature of the Objects or Bodies, hence it comes that God having once created them, they subsist in virtue of this Creation without needing any new Concourfe or new Production either of their Being or their Activity, for their subjective Subsistence. But it is not altogether so as to other sorts of Communications.

**XXXIII.** *The external, umbratile and objective Communication of the Son and Holy Ghost, (which is the Light and fruitful Harmony of things) needs the continual Concourfe of the Son and Holy spirit.* XXXIII. God communicated or represented himself umbratilely to corporeal things as Son, by that Light Irradiation, and bright Effort that every thing makes from its centre to other Creatures, to discover to them the Idea of its Beauty; (I speak here of things as they were when God first made them) and he communicated or represented himself to the Creatures and by them as Holy Ghost, by that sweet and agreeable Influence, Connexion and Union which things have with one another, whereon depends their Perfection and Fruitfulness. Now as the Communication which the Son and Holy Ghost make of themselves to intelligent Creatures, is not a subjective Communication, in that Sense we have explain'd it in, but an objective one only, which, tho' internal and the most intimate possible, is made by the Offer of a *continual* and gratuitous Concourfe; so likewise this shadowy Communication and Representation of the Son and Holy Ghost in corporeal things, is made in them by a *continual* Influence and



and Concourse of Acts presenting and offering the Son and Holy Spirit after the same manner and in Conformity to the internal Act or Offer which the Son and Holy Ghost continually make of themselves to the Soul. My Meaning is this, that in such Measures as the Son and Holy Spirit do constantly and inwardly offer to the Soul their Light and their Joys, in the very same also does the same Son and Holy Spirit make upon corporeal things that luminous Impression, or rather Direction, and that harmonious Influence of these things, the Enjoyment whereof they offer to Man's Body.

Hence it comes to pass, that every one shall in such a Measure enjoy the external Light and material Pleasures, as he does the spiritual Light and Joys; and as far as he has fitted himself to receive the one, so far also has he prepar'd himself to receive the other; just as he has made way for the Offer and Operation of the Son and Holy Spirit presenting themselves to, and acting inwardly and divinely in his Soul; just so will he have made room for the Offer and Operations of the Son and Holy Spirit presenting themselves outwardly, and acting, or directing the Actions of Creatures, embellishing and fertilizing them externally, that these Objects of his Body may in their way make him happy, that from the Enjoyment of them the Soul may in acknowledgment and Gratitude return to God the Source of its Happiness, and may see him drawn in himself internally, and by proper Characters, even upon corporeal things.

*Whence the  
Inequality  
of corporeal  
Delights  
in eternal  
Life pro-  
ceeds.*

XXXIV. I fancy Thoughts so abstracted, or if you please, so screw'd up, and so little material, will not relish with all. and the rather because they are out of their proper Place, and pure Digressions. If so, I am sorry; and I could heartily wish Men were not so fleshly and so beastly as not to be able to raise their Thoughts to things on high; and I heartily desire that my self in the first Place were rid of my Carnality and Brutishness, that will not suffer me to say any thing but what is very poor and mean concerning the infinite and incomparable Grandures of our God, which yet shall not hinder me from telling them after my childish and imperfect Way. And why should I not, since

XXXIV.  
*The Usefulness  
of  
these  
things, and  
their Con-  
formity  
with the  
Scripture.*

Chap. I. the Scripture does so, and refers to the Word, or the Son of God, the Production of Light, the *fiat Lux*; and to the Holy Spirit to have presided, as I may say, over the fostering the Fertility, and the Immeation of things towards their orderly settling and agreeably mixing together, & *spiritus Dei incubabat aquis*; the Spirit of God sate or brooded upon the Waters? I will not answer those that complain of this as a Digression, for this will appear groundless to any one that understands what it is to search and explain thoroughly the first Truth of things.

XXXV. XXXV. I very well remember, that in the (a) first Treatise I have spoken of the Light, the Beauty, the Goodness, the Immeation, the Accord and Fecundity of things, as if they were Properties belonging to 'em, and tended of themselves to Duration and Continuation without needing the Concourse and Reproduction of God; which seems contrary to what I now assert. I own I had not then so well consider'd this Matter, and that a false Sense might be drawn from what I there say, and possibly a contradictory one, if compar'd to what I here advance. But if we will consider things to the bottom, I said nothing there but what may have, and indeed has a very true Sense, which is this, and you may take it either for an Explication or Rectification of my first Thoughts:

(a) Oecon. Things have two sorts of Properties, either subjective, and such as result from their Nature; or objective, that result from the Union or Concourse of things with their Objects; and so, tho' the Light, the Beauty, the Goodness, the Accord, and fertile kind of Communication of things are not their subjective Properties, yet are they their objective; and tho' they be inherently in a Subject, yet are they there only from the Result of its Union with the Object. These Properties tend to endure and continue as well on the part of their true Cause the Son of God and the Holy Spirit (who are so far from withdrawing them, that they persist to communicate them eternally;) as on the part of their occasional Causes, (what I mean by them I shall tell you by and by) and of their Subjects, which have Faculties dispos'd and after their way aspiring after them, whence it is that I have somewhere call'd these Faculties

ties (a) *perfective*, that is to say, tending towards Perfection, yet without truly causing it. Chap. I.

Again, it is true, that the objective Properties do or do not stand in need of God's continual Concourse, according to the Sense we give those Words. For if we take it for a continual Reiteration of new Acts of God, as if one Act of God being exerted, it tended to nothing, and God were oblig'd to exert another in its Room; in this Sense they have no need of his continual Concourse; but they have, if you take it for an Act of the Son and Holy Spirit, which Act is conditional with respect to Man, that is to say, which will not subsist to Man, or will not act upon his Body, or upon the Creatures that make Impression upon it, but so long as Man does not resist the Son of God and the Holy Spirit as offering themselves and divinely acting upon the Interior of his Soul. (a) Oecon of the Creation. Chap. 6. § 20.

Hence it comes, that such as shall reject the internal and divine Offers and Operations of the Son and Holy Spirit of God, shall also find themselves void of their external Operations, of the external and material Light, Beauty, Harmony and Delights. A Lesson (this by the by) for such as love not God, nor seek his Divine Face, nor his holy Inspirations in their Hearts. Those that reject the internal Operations of the Son of God and the H. Spirit deprive themselves of the external ones. This is what has already befallen the Devil, and will assuredly be the Case of all impenitent Sinners.

XXXVI. There is, to avoid Confusion, a more particular Remark to be made upon the Fecundity or Fertility of the Creatures, than upon the other Properties I have been speaking of. And 'tis this, that this Property contains two things, viz. Activity or the bare Reproduction of it self, which is a subjective Property proceeding from God the Father, and the Reproduction of it self in Conjunction with Light, Goodness, and delicious and glorious abundance, which must be reckon'd among the objective Properties resulting from the Union of the bare thing produc'd with the bright and blessed Offers of the Son and Holy Ghost. XXXVI. There is in the Production of Creatures something subjective, and something objective; one whereof has need of God's Concourse, the other not. This being so, the Fecundity of Creatures, as we consider in it barely the Reproduction of themselves, is a Property in them never to be lost, without needing God's continual Concourse: For without any such Concourse the Creatures do as true Causes reproduce



Chap. I.  duce themselves, and do naturally tend thus to produce one another as real, but second Causes. But if we consider the Fecundity of Creatures as a continual Effusion of Light and Happiness, the Creature does not tend towards it. nor contribute any thing to it but as an admissive and occasional Cause, and not as a true Cause, either first or second: For the Word of God and the Holy Spirit alone are the only and true Cause of this, and such a Cause as does on its Part always tend to reproduce or augment or continue its bright and blessed Effects, so far as the Subject endow'd with Faculties tending and breathing this Way, does not make it self incapable of them by its Irregularities, which it has been guilty of, or would be, should it naturally reproduce it self, but this is sufficient to prevent the Difficulties which might arise from the above-cited Place. Let us now pursue the Subject before us.

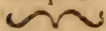
XXXVII. *A general and particular Course, Rule, Ways, and Acts of God in external things.* XXXVII. Now as in the Offer which God makes of the internal and beatifying Object to the Soul we have taken notice of a Concourse, of a general and universal Rule and Way, of a general and yet singular and individual Act, and also of special Acts; we may likewise observe the same things in the Offer that God makes of Light and Beauty, and of the harmonious and fruitful State of Creatures to Man's Body. He will offer them constantly on his Part, and of this his Will he has made a *Rule*. He executes this his Will equally and in the same manner in Substance towards all (and this makes the *Generality and Singularity of his Act and of his Ways* :) For all receive from him these Advantages as far as is necessary for their accessory Happiness, and to be brought this way to the pure Contemplation of God, and to a Dependance on him; tho' there be in this substantial Equality of the Offer of God a thousand Diversifications and *Particularities*, not only as God produces in divers manners Light and other beautiful and good Qualities in the bright and pleasant Objects; but likewise as these bright and pleasing Objects, or if you will, their Light, Beauty and Harmony do strike different Persons diversely, as these Persons are, as to what is accessory of Constitutions differing from one another; and I believe, that as there are not in the World, no not in the World of Glory, two Persons that are in  
all

all things exactly alike, so neither are there any two that are exactly and equally affected by the same Objects; and consequently it is probable there are not any two Persons that have exactly the same Sensations of the same thing without any accessory Difference in the manner of Perception. Chap. I.

XXXVIII. I have said enough of the third thing which I said was requisite to God's Design of having other Beings besides himself happy; which was that these Beings should have a beatifying Object presented them. We have seen abundantly how God thus provided, as well by offering to the Soul of Man constantly, universally and singularly, the Light of his Son and the Joys of his Spirit, by which it becomes solidly and perfectly happy; as likewise by offering to his Body external Light and Pleasures, that he might be also accessorially happy, and might by this superficial Happiness be led to the Contemplation of the solid Felicity, and to a Dependence on God the Fountain of it. xxxviii.  
God has  
amply pro-  
vided the  
third Re-  
quisite  
above-  
nam'd.

XXXIX. Before I pass to the fourth thing to be consider'd, I desire it may be noted, that altho' it be God himself that produces and upholds by his Word and by his Spirit, the Light, the Goodness, or the Order and Fertilisation, the vivifying Life, as I may say, of the Creatures, or the Vigour of the universal Spirit; yet this does not say, that either Man or the Creatures are void of Activity, Force or Powers, and that God acts immediately all in them; no such thing. The Creatures always have subjectively ever since God's first Donation of it to them, Activity, Motion, and the Powers depending on them, without God's any more interposing as to this; but all these would be devoid of Light, and of all sweet and living Vigour, except God by a constant Application did produce in them these beautiful Impressions. The Case is the same with Man. He is properly active, acting and reproducing himself, he disposes of himself, excites and governs the Acts of his Faculties; but he can neither cause Life nor Vigour, nor Light in the external Objects. This is much the same with what I said concerning Fecundity. I design not to carry this Speculation higher, nor be still telling you I consider things here as they were before the Fall. XXXIX.  
Nor does it  
hence fol-  
low that  
the Crea-  
tures are  
destitute of  
all active  
Power.

## Chap. I.



The fourth and fifth Things requir'd to  
Happinefs.

XL. (4.)  
The fourth  
thing re-  
quisite to a  
Being that  
is to be  
made hap-  
py, the  
free and  
active Ad-  
mission of  
its Object.

XL. (4.) The fourth Requisite to a Being that is to be made divinely happy, is, that this Being have a Power not only passively to receive, but in a manner to cause or occasion (if you please) the Admission or Presence of the beatifying Object. Tho' I intend to mention here only the divine and spiritual Object which makes the solid Happinefs, yet what I say here and in the following Article, may by Parity of Reason be apply'd to the external Objects which God offers brightly and sweetly to Man's Body, for his accessory Happinefs, thereby to bring him back to the Contemplation and Fountain of his divine Felicity. I say therefore, to make the Happinefs of an intelligent Creature solidly and divinely perfect and delightful, the beatifying Object is not to be receiv'd into the Soul in a way meerly passive, and as it were quite mechanical, but in an active manner, and such an one as comes very near to Causality. Whoever will but call to mind the eighteen or twenty Reasons that I have alledg'd in the first (a) Treatise, to shew that Man must needs have been made free, will also see Reason why his Happinefs must not have been purely passive, but active also; and so will make it needless for me to say any thing here more particularly on that Point; only that this supposes two things; first, that it be left to the Liberty of the intelligent Creature to let the beatifying Object enter into it at its own Choice and Discretion. Secondly, that it not only introduce it into it self barely by an Act of Liberty and Consent, but also that it seize it and force it, as it were, in an active manner, and so in a sort cause the Entry and Admission of it into its Interiour.

(a) Oecon.  
of the  
Creation.  
Chap. 17.

XLI. That  
it follows  
hence that  
God was to  
furnish Man  
with Li-

XLI. I have nothing to add upon the first of these two things but this, that we must not part it from the second, and that we may observe that it hence follows, that Liberty, and that Liberty was not to be determin'd by any absolute Decree, Act or Foreknowledge.



that the Divine Providence was to give Man such a Chap. II  
 Liberty as was neither to be predetermin'd, nor deter-  
 min'd or bounded by any Decree or by any physical and  
 irresistible Act; no nor by any infallible Foresight; (a) Oecon.  
 I think I have in the first Tract (a) sufficiently demon- of Creat.  
 strated the Possibility and the metaphysical Truth of Chap. 13.  
 this, as well in Relation to God as to the intelligent  
 Creatures, which cannot be suppos'd free without over-  
 throwing both Predetermination, and all pretended eter-  
 nal Decrees touching the particular Acts, and all deter-  
 minate Foreknowledge touching all their Particularities;  
 for the making a Creature free is formally and essentially  
 the making of a Creature whose Actions we will nei-  
 ther determine nor determinately know till the Crea-  
 ture does from it self please to determine it self to act  
 so or so. One may indeed foresee many things con-  
 cerning such a Creature as possible, and if you will,  
 as probably future, but not as certainly so; this is con-  
 tradictory, in as much as the Principle of its Futurition  
 is in a Creature as a Principle that may act or not act,  
 to the very Moment that it shall please to determine  
 it self. The Difficulties that seem to arise from this  
 Truth respecting chiefly the Events of things since the  
 Fall, I shall defer their Consideration till I come to  
 treat of God's Providence after Man's Sin.

XLII.

XLII. The Activity which the Soul is to set on *What the*  
 Work (as I may say) about its divine Object, to cause *Activity of*  
 it in some sort to enter into her, is the Act of the Fa- *the Soul is.*  
 culty of Desire, which she must joyn to the Act of her *That Pro-*  
 Consent which she gives to God to come and act with- *vidence*  
 in her. The Soul must not only give her simple Con- *has en-*  
 sent to the divine Offer and Will, but must also draw *dow'd Man*  
 it into her by her Desire, whereof we have (a) else- *with it.*  
 where seen the Conditions. She must therefore have a (a) Oecon.  
 free Desire, or a Liberty desiring; which Requisite of Co-  
 God has abundantly provided both as to her Desire and operat.  
 as to her Liberty. For the Nature of the Soul, which Chap. 6.  
 he has made, is in its most interiour Fund, nothing § 3.  
 but a Principle desiring infinite Happiness; and this  
 Desire is immediately put in act as soon as ever the  
 Liberty, which can do it, takes it off from all particu-  
 lar and finite Objects, and leaves it to it self. I have  
 in another Place handled this Subject more particu-  
 larly.

XLIII. Now

**XLIII.** *The Act of the Soul is in a manner the Cause of the Introduction of its Object. The false Notion of an occasional Cause.* XLIII. Now the Act of this free Desire has a certain Connexion with the Entrance and intimate and unitive Presence of the beatifying Object, by reason of which Connexion it is that we may look on this Act as a kind of Cause of this Entrance and this Presence of the Object which is annex'd to it. 'Tis true, it is not the Efficient, proper and true Cause of the Presence of the Object, but it is such a Cause of it as one may call *admissive* or *receptive*, or if you please to make use of a Word that has made Noise enough in the World already, *occasional*; provided we affix to this Word a Conception more real and more solid than some new, and a little too superficial Philosophers have given us of it. They commonly say that is an occasional Cause, between which and the Effect there is no necessary Connexion. Properly speaking, this Definition is not true, or at least not exact; and were it to be admitted, I see no Reason why an occasional Cause should rather be follow'd by one Effect, than by another; it would naturally be indifferent to every thing, and there would be no more natural Connexion between the Desire of Good and the Enjoyment of it, than between the Desire of Good and the Privation of it, or the Possession of Misery; but this is grossly absurd.

**XLIV.** *The true Notion of an occasional Cause; it has a natural and necessary Connexion with its Consequents or Effects.* XLIV. There is a natural and indeed a necessary Connexion between the *occasional Cause* and its Effect; but that which differences it from a real, true and efficient Cause is this, that the Effect does not follow or proceed from any Power that is subjectively in the occasional Cause, but meerly from the Virtue that is in the first Cause, or in God. I will endeavour to make this as clear as possible I can.

It is certain that the Works of God and the Tyes that are among them are not Things and Rencontres purely occasional and indifferent to one another, without Reason, Proportion and Wisdom, without any natural need they have one of another. God's Wisdom will not admit of this. It cannot suffer that the Reason of things should be grounded meerly on an Occasion without Reason and any natural Necessity. So neither has he thus dispos'd things as it will evidently appear if we consider them but a little more narrowly.

Let us suppose it was God's Pleasure to produce a Chap. I.  
 spiritual Subject, that he might make it happy by the  
 Infusion of his Divine Light and Blessedness; and like-  
 wise a corporeal Subject to perfect it by external Light  
 and Goods. It is visible, that because he is wise and  
 does not cross his own Design, there must be some  
 Proportion between these Subjects and their Objects,  
 and that the Nature of the one must be capable to re-  
 ceive the other. This Capacity and Proportion that  
 is between them, is the Tye, or rather the *natural*  
*ground of the Tye*, that is between these things. And it  
 is plain, that the Nature of a Subject that is made for  
 a certain Object, has naturally more Connexion, or a  
 ground of a greater Connexion with that Object than  
 with any other different or contrary one. Here we  
 see already a Reason of a Tye, or of the ground of a  
 natural Tye between these sorts of things.

Nevertheless, as the Subject cannot actually enjoy  
 the Object but by means of one of its Acts, the  
 Question is whether there be a necessary Connexion  
 between the Act of the Subject and the Entrance or  
 Presence of the Object. To which we answer, that there  
 is, (but this Necessity is a Necessity of Consequence  
 and not of Production) for God having made the Sub-  
 ject on purpose to receive its Object, if the Object  
 should not enter when the Subject prepares and fits it  
 self to receive it, that is to say, in spiritual things, if  
 when the Soul freely directs its Desire void of every  
 thing else towards God, God should not then brightly  
 descend into the Soul; and if when the Body opens its  
 Eyes towards the corporeal Light, this Light should  
 not enlighten them, God would then dispose of his spi-  
 ritual and corporeal Light contrary to his own Design  
 and the Dispositions he has put in the things he crea-  
 ted. But this is impossible, and the contrary must ne-  
 cessarily be true, by reason of God's Wisdom and  
 Uniformity with himself. Therefore there is a neces-  
 sary Connexion between the Acts of Subjects and the  
 Acts of Objects upon them and in them. And there-  
 fore there is a natural Reason and a necessary Connex-  
 ion between what we call *occasional Causes* and their  
*Effects*.



XLV. *The Difference between real or physical and occasional Causes.*

XLV. But is not this to turn occasional Causes into real and physical ones? No; for what makes a Cause a physical one, is this, that the Effect follows from it by virtue of a Power that is subjectively in it, which neither is nor can be in an occasional Cause. For it is not from any Virtue or Power of a desiring Soul, that the divine Light comes into it upon its Desire. As likewise it is not from any Virtue or Force in the opening of the Eyes of the Body, that the light and the bright and good Objects become present to them. This Force and this Virtue by which the Objects, become present to the Body, is subjectively and truly in God alone. And so it is God only that is the true and real Cause of the Presence of all bright Objects as well divine as material. The Acts of Man's Soul and of his Body are only the occasional Causes of them, between which and the Enjoyment of the Objects there is nevertheless a Reason of a necessary Connexion. But the Soul is still the true Cause of the Acts of her Desire and Consent, as well as of the Act of opening her Eyes.

XLVI. *An occasional and a physical Cause. The first is found only in Matters of Grace, the other only in Hell.*

XLVI. Lastly, to say in three Words what the System, what the whole Truth and Use of occasional, of real, or physical Causes is, *Every thing is the physical and natural Cause of the direct and immediate Acts of its own Faculties, and is only the occasional Cause of the Acts which the bright and beatifying Objects exert upon it.* So that occasional Causes have no Place save during the Work of our eternal Salvation or but in that blessed State to which God designs to bring us both Soul and Body. Out of these two States every thing is natural, and the Work of Creatures. 'Tis Ignorance, Confusion and Blindness to tell us, as our new Philosophers do, that there are no Causes but occasional ones in Nature. There are no such Causes but only in Grace, when the Question is, what Man contributes to the illuminating and beatifying Acts, but not when we enquire what Man does as to the Acts that admit the Illumination and Blessedness offer'd. But in meer Nature depriv'd of all bright and beatifying Acts and Objects, I would say in Hell, (here you have a Notion of Hell) there is no such thing as an occasional Cause. All Causes there are physical. For where ever there is an occasional Cause, there nothing can supply the Place of the

true

true Cause and its Act, but God only and his immediate Act. But since the Creation, wherein God once exerted a dark Act that gave Birth to active Beings, he never acted immediately by himself any more, but only brightly and peacefully; a way of acting never to be found in Hell; therefore will there be no occasional Causes there. I will not stay to explain more clearly what may perhaps exercise some cavilling Wits, the Meaning of some of the Expressions I just now us'd. Whoever fully comprehends them, will understand a great deal more than either I can or will say here.

XLVII. Let us return now to our principal Article, or to our fourth Requisite; and then let us see how the Divine Providence has taken care that the Subject it intends for Happiness be able to admit, and in a manner to cause the Presence of its Happiness, or the Act of the Object that is to make it happy. The Divine Providence has done this by establishing the Act of Desire of the Soul and of her free Consent, the occasional Cause of the unitive and efficacious Presence of the infinitely bright and delicious Object. And to the end this Desire and Liberty might be suited to the infinite Object, and might be truly free, God has been pleas'd neither to limit nor determine, nor to foresee determinately their Ways of acting. The same in Proportion is to be said of the Happiness of the Body, of its bright and delicious Objects, and of the Liberty to dispose of the Acts of its Faculties.

XLVIII. (5.) The Fifth and last of the things requir'd to make a Being happy, which God created for that Purpose, was, as we said before, that the beatifying Object should act in this Being in Proportion as it was receiv'd into it, that is, in the same Measures and Degrees in which the Desire and Liberty being turn'd towards him, had occasionally receiv'd it into the Soul, which is thus made the living Temple, and is fill'd with the adorable and powerfully acting Being of God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. But if ever Providence thought and took care of any thing it was of this, which God has so resolv'd and is so fully set up-

Chap. I.

XLVII.

*The Providence of God has supply'd the fourth Requisite by establishing the free Desire of the Soul, the occasional Cause of her Illumination.*

XLVIII.

*(5.) The fifth Requisite above-mention'd. The Action of the Object. The unchangeable Rule by which God acts in this, that on, he acts in the Soul*

*just so far as the Soul is freely turn'd towards him.*

Chap. I. on, that one would say, (might we speak so) that God seems willing to B E only for this. Therefore is it that he has establish'd for a *Truth*, for a *Rule*, for an UNIVERSAL, *impartial* and *immutable* D E C R E E, that He, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the most Blessed and Adorable Trinity, will insinuate and operate in the Soul by transforming and divinizing its Desires, enlightning its Understanding, and overcoming its Heart with Torrents of Delights, so far and proportionably to the Soul's free turning of her self towards him. This effectual Will of God is so universal, that it has no Exception; so impartial that all intelligent Creatures shall more or less enjoy God and his saving Operations, not by any Principle of Difference and Equality that proceeds from God's Part, but according as they have more or less extensively turn'd their Desire and their Liberty towards God, who for his part continues always to act uniformly, equally, and in Proportion, and suitably to the Disposition of the Act of his Creature, which shall certainly be by God uniformly and simply fill'd and actuated according to its utmost Extent, and to the degrees of its Fervour. In fine, this effectual Will of God is so immutable, that come what will, it will never change, which makes that excellent mystical Divine *Taulerus* say, that tho' God had sworn by himself to a Creature or a Sinner, that he would never have any Communion with him, if for all that this Sinner turn'd himself towards God, he would be forc'd notwithstanding his Oath, to come into his Soul and fill it with his Grace. For 'Tis absolutely impossible that God should disapprove or reject the Desire and Liberty that are turn'd towards him. Can God reject the Desire which a Creature has after God? This would be to dislike himself, which is the greatest Impossibility of any.

XLIX.  
Election is  
made in  
Conformity  
to this  
Rule and  
Will of  
God.

XLIX. This Will of God is so impartial and immutable, that God's Election is guided by it. Supposing the Creatures had continu'd still in Innocence, God would not have chosen any of 'em to greater or lower Degrees of Happiness, but as they had more or less fully turn'd themselves towards him. If we suppose them fallen into Sin, and that God after by a kind of second Creation restores them to such a Condition that they



they can turn themselves to him again, he will chuse Chap. I.  
none to Salvation, or to higher or lower degrees of  
Glory, but according as they shall more or less turn  
towards him their Desire and their Liberty, otherwise  
he will leave them. In this Procedure of God there is  
a wonderful Impartiality, Universality, Equality, Uni-  
formity and Simplicity, in which neither the Devil  
himself nor all the Cavils of Hell can find the least  
Shadow of Partiality, Exception or Injustice. We  
may see here of what vast Extent these Truths are.

L. This divine Act of the Adorable Trinity inti- L. The Act  
mately united to the Soul is the true, real, and efficient of God is  
Cause of eternal Life and Happiness, which none de- the real  
serve but by the pure good Will which God had in his Cause of  
Son to produce Beings to make them happy thro' him eternal  
and his Holy Spirit, who alone in Unity with the Fa- Life  
ther are and actually cause this Happiness which is not  
of any Creatures making, tho' the Creature have Power  
given it to be the occasional Cause of it, as I said  
before.

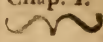
LI. Some, it may be, may here object, that seeing LI. Whence  
God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, is equally and it is that  
in substance the same in all the Blessed, how can it be God being  
that he should operate unequally in them; or if you the same  
please, how is it possible that the Blessed should not in all the  
equally enjoy the same Operations of God! Can this Saints, yet  
be without conceiving some sort of Inequality and Di- produces in  
versity on God's Part? To comprehend the Solution them diffe-  
of this Difficulty, I shall take leave to make this Sup- rent Ope-  
position. Suppose we, that God who always in rations.  
substance equally possesses himself, may yet at some  
times desire himself less ardently than at others. Were  
it so, it is plain that when God desir'd himself less, he  
would less sensibly possess himself, and would less en-  
joy the Contemplation, the Light and Joys of himself,  
and on the contrary, he would enjoy them more, and  
relish them more, and would appear to himself more  
gloriously when he desir'd himself more. Now what  
is impossible with respect to God (I mean as to more  
or less in his essential Acts) is with respect to the Crea-  
ture both possible and true; the Desire of the Creature  
being capable of Diminution and Augmentation. And  
as this Desire is the Subject and Foundation upon  
which

Chap. I. which God the Father sets in the Soul his bright Word and his Holy Spirit, it is evident, that tho' God place his Word and his Spirit equally in substance upon all the Blessed Spirits, yet those whose Desire is more extensive, fervent and quick, do feel and perceive more the same Thing, the same Light, and the same delicious Touches; and that those whose Desire is less, do perceive and relish them less. Different Persons, whose Sight, Hearing, Taste, Smelling and Touch are more or less quick and large, must needs feel and perceive very differently and unequally the same Light, the same Harmony, the same Meat, the same Perfume, and the same tangible Quality. This Difference of Sensation proceeds only from the Subject feeling and perceiving, the Object is still the same without any Inequality.

LII. God is free to give his Subjective Gifts unequally, but to the Subjects of Faculties naturally equal he gives nothing unequally, but by reason of their Choice and free Acts.

LII. Not but that if we consider God's Liberty antecedently to the Existence of things, and he having in himself infinite Realities, Properties and Combinations of Properties to represent; not but that, I say, he might have created spiritual Beings or Subjects exceedingly different in Realities, Capacities, Order, and Subjective Gifts in infinite Variety. He did so when he created the Angelick Minds: This is what none doubt of; but this is besides our Question, which is not here concerning the subjective, but the objective Gifts of things.

'Tis demanded, why Spirits that have not different Subjective Gifts or Capacities, are fill'd with Light and divine Joys, some more amply and livelily than others of the same Rank, or are possess'd otherwise than their ordinary Capacities seem to require; and why others are fill'd with them less extensively and vigorously than they might have been, or than others of the same Order and Capacity with themselves are? For 'tis certain there are Subjects naturally equal in their Fund, some whereof are yet enlighten'd, beatify'd and glorify'd beyond what their ordinary Size and Capacity seems to import, and that others are much less so than they might have been; not to say there are some who are not at all blest with Light and Happiness, of which their Nature was capable. 'Tis of this Diversity we ask the Reason; and to this, say, that this Inequality proceeds,

ceeds not from any Impartiality or unequal Choice on Chap. I.  
 God's Part, but from the Rule, the Will, the Decree   
 universal, uniform, impartial and immutable, which  
 God has made to infuse himself, and to operate bright-  
 ly and deliciously in Souls, in Proportion as they have  
 more or less fully, more or less ardently, more or less  
 constantly and fervently turn'd themselves towards him.  
 Now as among many Spirits which may be suppos'd  
 of equal Capacities, and of the same subjective Gifts,  
 there are some, tho' very rare, that make extraordinary  
 and heroical Efforts above the common Way, and  
 others exert but common Acts, and such as are pro-  
 portion'd to the ordinary Pitch of their Capacity, and  
 that others do not so much as they might; and lastly,  
 that others exert none at all, or quite contrary Acts.  
 Hence it is, and not from any thing else, that God  
 operates more or less brightly and deliciously, or not  
 at all in these Subjects, that tho' naturally equal in Fa-  
 culties and Capacities, have yet so differently and un-  
 equally turn'd their Liberty towards God, and given  
 Admission to him.

LIII. This is what I had to remark upon the man- LIII. *The*  
 ner of the Divine Providence's acting with Man, or *Recapitu-*  
 generally with all intelligent Beings, in order to save *lation of*  
 them; by giving them all without exception a free and *the Con-*  
 active Being or Nature endow'd with Faculties and *duct of*  
 Powers of Desire, Intellect and Love, with a Capa- *divine Pro-*  
 city to admit the infinite Light and Good, whereof *vidence*  
 they could not be the true Causes (as they are of the *before the*  
 Acts of their own Faculties) but only the occasional *Fall, to*  
 Causes, by freely turning the Acts of their Faculties *attain its*  
 towards God, who presents to them in a preventing, con- *End, the*  
 stant, general, simple, and individual manner, the Light *Salvation*  
 of his Word, and the Joys of his Holy Spirit, (to say *of intelli-*  
 nothing of the external Means of Light and accessory *gent Beings*  
 Delights) being pleas'd neither to limit, determine, or  
 determinately to foresee their Liberty; the Conduct  
 whereof he has establish'd, the occasional and admmissive  
 Cause of his luminous and beatifying Grace, and which  
 he has immutably, universally and impartially resolv'd  
 to introduce, unite and make efficaciously to operate so  
 far and in Proportion as the Soul shall freely turn her  
 D self



Chap. I. self towards it, which is God himself the only and true Cause of the Salvation and Happiness of the Soul.

LIV. *The Truth of this System and the Falseness of all other.*

LIV. I believe the most cavilling and unjust Devils can have nothing to say against so wonderful a Conduct of a most good and wise God, who designing to have happy Creatures, has so wonderfully well by his Providence furnish'd 'em with all things necessary to this End. All the Systems differing from this that have been invented upon this Subject, shew plainly their Falsity, by the Abysses of Difficulties, Absurdities and Falsities, into which they cast those that follow the natural and necessary Consequences of them. But that of Truth is so easie and so clear, that it leaves no considerable Difficulties in the Minds of those that comprehend it throughly. I think there neither are nor really can be any. At least with all the Skill that I have to find out and foresee them, I can think of none the Solutions whereof are not to be met with in the foregoing Treatises.

LV. *The Obscurity and Difficulty of the Ways of God ought not to be a Prejudice against their Clearness and Easiness.*

LV. I am not ignorant that some take Clearness and Easiness in this Point, for a certain Sign that we have not hit on the right Ways of God; and on the contrary, that they take Darkness and even Absurdity it self for a sure Sign that we are in the Ways of the Lord under Covert of this Exclamation of St. Paul, *How incomprehensible are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out (a)!* But besides that, this Passage of St. Paul relates to things of the Divine Oeconomy after the Fall, and not to that before, the Sense of the Apostle is not nor can be, that the Judgments and Ways of God are incomprehensible and obscure, when the time is come that God is pleas'd to manifest them, and gives his Light and Holy Spirit to enable Men to understand them; for then on the contrary they are Clearness, Easiness and Streightness it self. *The Ways of the Lord are right, and the Just walk therein, says the Prophet (b). The spiritual Man discerneth all things and judgeth all things, and the Holy Spirit which he hath received searcheth the deep things of God (c).* But when the time is not yet come to understand certain Mysteries, certain Ways of God certain Promises and Predictions which God makes long before they come to pass, such as were the Rejection of the Jews, the Conversion of the Gentiles, and

(a) Rom. 11. 33.

(b) Hof. 14. 9.

(c) 1 Cor. 2. 14, 15.

and then the Restoration of the *Jews*, and the Excision of the Christian Nations, in this Case all the Industry of Man cannot comprehend them; and such things are indeed unintelligible and past finding out by human Understanding and all its Powers; as are still the Prophecies of *Daniel*, and the Revelations of *St. John*, which yet will be Light and Easiness it self, when the time for them to be understood is come; God will then give the Spirit of Understanding in these Matters to whomsoever he pleases. Let us not therefore any longer abuse this Passage of *St. Paul* to the Prejudice of the Easiness of God's Lights, and to cover the Absurdities and Chimera's of human Understanding.

We must observe that this so clear and easie System that I have given will be always the same in Substance, both at and after the Fall, excepting that upon Occasion of the Accident of Sin, which aims to hinder its Execution, God will superadd means to remove this accessory Obstacle, and to carry on the same Designs by the substantial Part of these Ways, and of this very System, which shall at last be ratify'd and accomplish'd.

We are now come to the second Consideration we promis'd to make upon the *Providence* of God, which is its Conduct in the Design God had to save his Creatures even while the first Sin was a committing.

## CHAP. II.

*Of the Divine Providence for the Salvation of Man when he was about to sin.*

I.  SHOULD soon have ended this Chapter if I confin'd my self within the Limits of the Title of it, and treated only of what God's Providence has done to save intelligent Creatures, and particularly Man, when Sin was just about to be committed, and when it actually was a committing until its full Completion. This is what I think I have particularly and largely enough treated of in most part of the *Oeco-*

*I. The Design of this Chapter.*

Chap. II. *nomys of Sin*, both to demonstrate the Truth, and to give the Solution of what Difficulties may occur in that Matter. Yet there is one that I will touch again here, and verifie the Truth of this Chapter by the Parallel of God's Conduct afterward under the Oeconomy after Sin, which I shall only prove in general, and that to some sort of Readers only.

II. (1.) *At the Fall God on his Part neither retracted nor chang'd any thing.* II. To see how God's Providence has done all that belong'd to it to do to save his intelligent Creatures, (and particularly Man, who is our principal Subject) when they were falling into a Tendency to sin, and to separate themselves from that Blessedness for which God made them, and had so admirably, charitably and universally provided them all those things we have been treating of in the preceding Chapter, we need but observe, (1.) That all those things continued still the same, and that there was no Alteration of any of them on God's Part. (2.) And that God had done all as to his preventing Graces and particular Acts and Gifts that could then be done; so that if it so fell out that his Creature did not attain the Bliss and Happiness for which he had design'd him, it came so to pass purely by the Fault and voluntary Change of this Creature, which, contrary to the Design and Will of God, would make it self miserable without God's being able to hinder it by his Omnipotence. For first,

III. *At the Fall God neither withdrew from Man his Subjective nor objective Gifts, but Man rejected them.* III. It is certain, that when Sin was a committing, or as I may say, a forming and fashioning, that all that Man had receiv'd subjectively from God still continu'd in him, Being, Faculties, Liberty, Activity and the rest. And it is also certain, that God on his Part furnish'd Man constantly and liberally the Object of his Light and of his Love; and that the Creature's Misery did not commence thro' any Act of Retraction or Revocation which God made of his objective Gifts, for the Gifts of God are unchangeable and without Repentance (a). He does not retract any of them, *All are in him Yea and Amen (b)*; not Yea and Nay.

(a) Rom. II. 29. And this is so highly and exceedingly true, that even after the Commission and Consummation of Sin, God does not, properly speaking, withdraw from the Sinner his Light and his Love by way of any Act of Privation on his Side, as if he depriv'd a Subject of them



them that were capable of receiving them. It is not so; 'tis the Subject that drives God from it self, and if after its having driven him away, it were yet capable to receive him, God would re-enter it still; but as it ceases to be a Subject capable of God, God no longer offers or presents himself to it. For to what purpose should he, or rather, how is it possible for an Object to offer it self to what, as to such Object, is a meer nothing? Not but that the Sinner after his being hardned has always Faculties naturally capable of God; but their Capacity is then very remote from him; Sinners are no longer nearly capable of that God. The near and proximate Subject of the Divine Object is the Desire and the Liberty. But they have no more any free Desire towards God; and tho' God should be pleas'd still transiently to move their Desire, yet would their Liberty carry them away from him; which is no more than has already happen'd. For in truth, 'tis the Sinner alone that instead of occasioning in himself the unitive Presence of Good by freely turning towards it his Desire, would freely change this Inclination of his Desire into an Inclination towards other things; so that God being oblig'd (according to his immutable Rule and impartial Decree) not to enter and operate brightly and deliciously in the Soul, but so far and in Proportion to the Soul's Admission of him by freely turning her self towards him, it must needs be that when the Soul is fully bent to turn her self constantly from him, that God no more shine or operate in her for her Happiness, and that so she become miserable without the Divine Providence's contributing any thing towards it but its charitable Conduct to save her.

IV. Secondly, I say, God has prevented Man by all Ways possible to his Omnipotence to hinder his Fall and his Misery, and afterwards to lead him to Blessedness.

This is prov'd three or four Ways. The First is this, from the particular Consideration of what God did for Man when Sin first happen'd, as the Scripture shews us. This is what I have handled elsewhere (a), whi-

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2d. and 3d. (a) Oecon. of Sin, Chap. 11.

IV. God has done all that was possible to hinder Man's Fall. Four Ways to prove this Truth; the 1st. and 12.

Chap. II. ther I refer the Reader to avoid Repetition. The *Second* Way to prove the Truth in Question is from right Reason, to which it would be flatly contrary to affirm, that God drew Creatures out of nothing by his Omnipotence on purpose to make them happy, and then that this same Omnipotence forsook them, and would not exert it self to secure them from Misery. This Procedure is irrational and self-contradictory. For we thereby suppose that God makes a thing for an End, and then that his Omnipotence neither acts nor does any thing for obtaining this End. Why should it thus contradict it self? The *Third* Way to prove the same Truth is, another Contradiction we should find in God as acting without (a), when we look on what he has done after Man's Sin. For after Man's Sin God has us'd all his Endeavours to restore him, and for this End has undergone a thousand painful Labours. But to what Purpose is all this, if he could have prevented his Fall? Why did he not spare all these infinite Pains whercof he so often complains? Where is the Wisdom of this! of meer Pleasure to let a thing fall, to raise it again with so much Difficulty! I think I have touch'd this Reason in another Place (b).

(a) Ad extra.  
(b) Occon of Sin.  
Chap. 3.

*Sin was not absolutely necessary to the Manifestation of the substantial part of God's Justice and Mercy.*

(c) Vide infra.  
Chap. 13.

And let none say, God did this that he might afterwards shew his Justice and his Mercy. The substantial Part of God's Justice might have been manifested without the Event of Sin, seeing it consists in rendering to every one according to his Works and Choice; nor is it any Matter to his Justice whether this Choice tend toward Good or Ill. So likewise the Substance of his Mercy, which is Grace, might have been shewn tho' there had been no Sin, the accessory Event of which has been the Occasion of a (c) Change only in the Denominations of Justice and Grace into those of *avenging Justice and Pity*, which are Denominations or Relations accessory only to what is substantial in Justice and Grace. It will be said that Mercy essentially supposes Misery: I grant it does; but then there are two sorts of Miseries; one is natural, by which the Soul being naturally void of Light and Good, and at the same time exceedingly quick and sensible, would be in a hellish State of Misery, if the Object of bright and delicious Grace did not mercifully present it self to her; which

which I have largely insisted on in the *Oeconomy of the Creation* (a) The other Misery supposes Sin. But it was not necessary God's Mercy should be this Way declar'd. It might have been sufficiently manifested the other way for God's accessary Glory, who needing not the Creatures for his essential Glory, much less needed be the Misery of their Sins. I may chance to handle this Difficulty more particularly somewhere else (b).

Chap. II.  
(a) Chap. 14. § 8, 9, 10. and Chap. 15. § 8, 9, 10.  
(b) Chap. 13. § 3.

Lastly, a *Fourth* Way to prove that God has made use of his Omnipotence to prevent and hinder Man's Misery, is taken from the Consideration of what he has done in the *Oeconomy of his Restoration*. I suppose none will dispute this Consequence with me, that if God after Man's Fall displays his Omnipotence to restore him, tho' most of those whom he thus wills to restore do eventually perish, he might likewise before the Fall have done all he could to hinder his falling into Misery, tho' Man actually did fall into it. For supposing the first, the latter has no Difficulty at all in it, and indeed there is an exact Parallel between them. Now, that God has done all he could after Man's Fall to save him, tho' Man perish again, 'tis what God himself assures us not only when he often represents to us all the Marvels which he has done, and the Exploits of his great Power, of his Arm and stretch'd out Hand to save Men, of the Riches of his Goodness towards them (which should rather have been call'd Niggardliness than Riches, had he spar'd to give them any thing that still was necessary and efficacious, and in his Power to give) but what's more, he says it in express and formal Terms, and calls Man to be Witness of it. *Ye Inhabitants of Jerusalem and Men of Juda, judge, I pray you, between me and my Vineyard: What could have been done more for my Vineyard, that I have not done* (b) ? It will, it may be, be said, that this Vineyard does not signify all Men. But that does not touch our present Question; 'tis enough here to prove that a Man may perish, tho' God has done all he could to hinder it. And this is what God evidently protests here with relation to the *Jews*. This Passage is so clear that it will excuse me from alledging others, which Men may more easily cavil about than they commonly do about this.

The fourth Way to prove the Truth in Question, from the Actions and Words of God.

(b) *Isai.* 5. 3, 4.



V. *The Difficulty that human Reason meets with in this Point, and which hinders Men from believing God himself.*

V. I intend not here to relate all the forc'd Interpretations that are us'd by Men to enervate this Passage of Scripture, because Men would not make 'em, were they not as it were constrain'd to it by this Reasoning, viz. If God had done all he could to hinder Man's Fall, or if he still did all he could to raise him from his Misery and to save him, and yet Man fell, and still after all perishes, it would follow that God were not omnipotent, or that his Power were limited and weak. This is that stumbling Stock Men are commonly unable to avoid, and because of which they put a violent and false Sense upon the Divine Scriptures, which they would not do, did they not split upon this Rock of Offence. For this Reason we must try wholly to remove it. But have I not already done it (a) elsewhere. Nevertheless, I will here say a Word or two more upon that Head; for we cannot labour too much in removing such mighty Difficulties, which also continually present themselves to our Imagination as utterly insuperable.

(a) *Oecon. of Sin. Chap. 6. § 6, 7, &c.*

VI. *Wherein the Power of God consists; that it extends not to contradictory things or Acts.*

VI. The Power of God consists in this, that having freely produc'd the Ideas and Natures of things in his Conception, he may produce them really out of himself when he pleases, and act upon them as he pleases. But it consists not in this, that he may destroy the Nature of things, much less that he destroy the Nature and Relations of things, while 'tis in the mean time suppos'd that the Nature of things and their Ideas still remain the same. Certainly this could never be done, tho' God himself should employ his Omnipotence all possible Ways. Hence we plainly see there are some things that cannot be done, tho' God be omnipotent, and however he use his Omnipotence. Why therefore should it be thought strange to say, that tho' God has done, and yet does all that he can, yet he cannot hinder Man from falling and perishing? For this is but the Application of a particular Case to a general Rule, which is granted to be true. But before we apply this to spiritual things, let us apply it to material.

VII. In

VII. In material things it is certain that the Object VII. *An*  
of God's Power is not the Destruction of the Nature of *Example of*  
a thing or of the Property of it, supposing all the while *this in*  
that this thing or Property still subsists and remains : *corporeal*  
For Example, the Nature of a Circle consists in this, *Beings.*  
that all the Lines drawn from the Center to the Cir-  
cumference be equal. This being granted, and sup-  
posing the Nature of the Circle to subsist and remain,  
it is certain God's Power may dispose of this Circle a  
thousand Ways by making some of infinite Variety as  
to Greatness, Situation and Matter, by making some  
to rest, and others move according to the infinite De-  
grees of Motion. In a Word, the Power of God can  
never be exhausted in the Production of innumerable  
Varieties and Effects upon this Circle. But to make  
it square, supposing it to continue still a Circle, is not  
the Object of Divine Power. 'Tis not to this that it  
extends, and so it may be truly said, that God cannot  
do this; and that notwithstanding all the Effects of his  
Omnipotence, the Circle will continue to have its Se-  
midiameters equal. For otherwise God would do and  
undo at the same time; he would make and preserve  
a certain Nature, and yet would unmake and destroy  
it, which would be a Contradiction and Weakness in  
God, thus to be able in Consent and Effect to disap-  
prove and disjoin himself from his Consent and Effect,  
or to be able to disjoin himself from himself, as suppos'd  
willing and making things without himself. This is  
impossible.

VIII. In like manner in things spiritual, God has in VIII. *The*  
his Conception produc'd ideally, and out of it in effect *Applica-*  
and really, Beings whose Nature, or if you will natural *tion of this*  
Property it is to be free, that is, to determine for *to spiritual*  
themselves their Faculties to certain Objects, and to *things. The*  
consent of themselves, I do not say, that the Objects *Power of*  
should simply present themselves to them, or simply act *God cannot*  
upon them in an objective manner, but that they *supply the*  
should enter intimately into them, and act upon them *determina-*  
in an unitive and transformative manner. This being *tive Act*  
so, and supposing (as all agree) that the Nature of these *of our Li-*  
Beings still subsists and remains, it is evident, that the *berty.*  
Power of God may easily dispose of them, and act up-  
on them Millions of different Ways: For he may give  
them

Chap. II. them more or fewer Objects, and diversifie these Objects infinite Ways, and so act upon the Sensibilities and Perception of the Soul objectively, and raise in it various Ideas, Sensations, Delectations, Fervours and Desires, but objectively and transiently only. But to make the Soul determine her Faculties to the intimate Admission of these Objects, or to make her consent that these Objects should intimately enter into her, and there act upon her in an unitive Way, this is no more the Object of divine Power than it is to make a Circle, while, tis such, a Square. God has not been pleas'd to extend his Power so far, nor can he will so to do, or do so without willing the Destruction and actually destroying the Nature of such intelligent and free Beings. As therefore it may truly be said, that whatever God may do with a Circle, yet it can never have unequal *Radius's* ; so likewise one may truly say, that whatever God may do with an intelligent and free Being, yet if this free Being will turn away its Faculties from God, and will not consent that he should operate unitively and habitually in it, God cannot make this Will to change upon this Score, that God can will it in the first Place. This shall never be done, nor ever can be done. God will indeed present to his Creature his Light, his Calls, his Sensations and Delectations, and in a Word, whatever he pleases : but the Being that is created intelligent and free, must on its own Stock begin to admit them intimately freely and unitively, and to desire them actively. God will never supply that Defect, neither indeed can he ; not for want of Power, but because this is not the Object of his Power. The Power of God lies not in destroying an immortal and everlasting Nature, nor in destroying it while it is suppos'd to subsist. This would be, under pretence of God's Power, and for fear of limiting it, to establish all sorts of Chimera's and Contradictions, as well in respect of God, as of the Creatures. For this way God would have constituted and made for ever a Creature to which he would have given, as a natural and subjective Property, the Power to determine it self, and yet it would be he that would himself determine it otherwise than this Creature did, or was about, or would have determin'd. And thus  
the



the Determination would have been made by this Creature (by Supposition) and yet would have been made by some other than this Creature; that is to say, it would be made by it, and would not be made by it; which is a Contradiction. Chap. II.

IX. And consequently, to return to our Conclusion, God could do, and truly did by his Divine Providence all that could be done to hinder Man from being miserable, and to make him eternally happy; tho' Man still had Power not to correspond with God's gracious Purpose, and to make himself miserable as it really came to pass, without any Impeachment of, and notwithstanding God's Omnipotence; as in like manner it still happens, that God does all he can to convert and save Men, and yet Men are not converted and sav'd. Not that God cannot convert and save them. He can do it; but the Object of this Power is only the free Will that will freely surrender it self and give its Consent; except in this Case a forc'd Conversion is not the Object of God's Power, and a forc'd and constrain'd Conversion is a meer Chimera and a Contradiction; that is to say, a Conversion-Aversion; or a Conversion not Conversion. None but the Devil, or the ridiculous Mind of Man can will such extravagant Absurdities. IX. The Power of God could not hinder but Man might undo himself. The gentle and infallible Determination of the Liberty a Contradiction.

To say, *That God does so gently determine and bend the Liberty, that it then consents without Force and infallibly,* is pitiful Nonsense that only covers two or three Contradictions: For 'tis as much as to say, *that God gently destroys the Liberty, and that upon this Destruction of it there follows its Restoration.* The Destruction of Liberty is contrary to the Supposition. Gentle Destruction is a formal Contradiction, all Destruction being formally violent. *Destruction the Fountain of Restoration,* another Contradiction this, nothing the Cause of Reality, or nothing not nothing.

X. I should not have enlarg'd so much upon this Point, were it not that lately chancing to look on a Book written by one of the great Genius's of this Age, (a) I light upon that Place where he examines what his X. To say that God has done all he could to save those that are not sav'd,  
is no Blasphemy, as the contrary Doctrine is. (a) Mr. Arnaud against Mr. Mallet.

Chap. II. his Adversary had said. " That *Jesus Christ* had done  
 " all he could to save *Judas*, and if this Wretch was  
 " lost, it was not because *Jesus* did not do all he could  
 " to hinder it. This makes him fly out into a mighty  
 Passion, and to brand this Doctrine as Blasphemy. In  
 truth, things have strangely chang'd their Names! I  
 for my Part, were I to call any thing Blasphemy, would  
 call the Doctrine opposite to this so. How! dare Men  
 reach that it was *Jesus's* Business to save *Judas* and all  
 those that perish, and that it was to be done by him  
 alone, that he could do it, and that if he had will'd so  
 to do, as 'tis suppos'd he might have will'd it, the thing  
 had been done, and yet that he meerly because it was  
 his Fancy (no doubt to take Pleasure in and to glorifie  
 himself and his Father in the Possession and Spectacle  
 of the Damn'd, and to present this rare Show to the  
 Court of Heaven) would not will to save them! O  
 cruel and blasphemous Doctrine! and such as cuts my  
 Heart with a most sensible Sorrow! How great are  
 Mens Darkness and Ignorance to think to honour God  
 by so cruelly dishonouring him! O my God! those  
 that have such Sentiments as these, are not yet acquaint-  
 ed with, nor sensible of, the Greatness of thy Good-  
 ness nor of thy Love! For we our selves, as bad as we  
 are, tho' we had an absolute Right over our Children,  
 nor were responsible to God or Man, yet would not  
 we let them grow vicious and wicked; no more than  
 we would let them fall into the Hands of the Executi-  
 oners and Tormentors to entertain the World with so  
 bloody a Spectacle, if it lay in our Power to help it.  
 And could God do thus towards his Creatures, and on-  
 ly because he would spare to exert his Power (suppo-  
 sing this a fit Object of it) and yet speak to them of his  
 infinite Goodness, protest to them that he wills not  
 their Death, and make his Complaints to them that he  
 has undertaken and suffer'd all that could be imagin'd  
 for them, that he has almost torn himself to pieces  
 (as I may say) to save them, and that yet they will  
 not comply nor make any Returns to all his Pains and  
 his Love. Would not this Procedure of God be more  
 truly Avarice, Deceit, Cruelty and Lying? Thus  
 strangely have Men glorify'd and adorn'd God by the  
 Conceits of their corrupt Reason!

XI. As I write impartially for all sorts of Men, and that among those that shall read this Book there may chance to be some *Roman* Catholicks, and such as are of the *Jansenists* Opinion, I intend to prove to them *ad hominem*, and by such Ways as to them are sacred, the Truth in question, viz. that God has done what he possibly could to hinder Men even after the Fall, without excepting *Judas* himself, from falling into eternal Perdition. This as we see, and as I have already noted, more directly appertains to what I shall say hereafter concerning the Divine Providence after the Fall of Man; but may be also apply'd to what concerns the Event of the first Fall and first Sin: for as to the thing it self it is ideally as true and as possible in one Case as the other; and as to God, the Infinity of his Love, the Uniformity and Plenitude of his way of Acting will not let us question this Conformity.

XI. Those of the Church of Rome ought not to doubt of this Truth if they will but follow their own Principles.

XII. The Persons I have respect to at present, do not question but in all Ages of the Church there were some Holy Persons illuminated of God, and that their Writings contain Lights truly Divine. But yet there is a great difference between 'em, which is not sufficiently consider'd. First, there are those that we call the Fathers, (especially of the later Ages) who were generally Great, Learned and Eminent Persons that made themselves Famous by the great and numerous Volumes they writ on all Subjects of Piety and Controversy. These take most with the Learned of our Age, because of their Knowledge and Authority that suits best with the Spirit of Vanity and human Learning of the Age. Therefore 'tis that they are so much studied, and quoted, and indeed made the Rule of what Men are to believe and do. It can't be deny'd but these had great Lights and great Vertues. But the Truth on't is, their Human Learning, and the Activity of their Reason, the Heat of Dispute, their Dignities and Authority in the Church, have made 'em mix with the Light of God and the Motions of his Holy Spirit, some false Lights and some Motions and Passions of corrupt Nature, which hinder'd them from clearly discerning the Rays of Divine Light in its entire and naked Purity.

XII. Three sorts of Writers that are of Authority among the Roman-Catholicks: Which are the best.

There



Chap. II. There are others (in the *second Place*) who, altho' Learned have been much more pure and calm, and that us'd their Learning only as a help to write (rather from a Principle of an honest Intention to teach others, than from a pure Motion of God) the Divine Lights they had acquir'd of God by a Faith and Love still mixt with the Activity of Reason, which, tho' mortify'd, was not yet wholly dead. Such were some of the Mystick Divines, who yet are beyond many of the Fathers.

But there were some, who, either being Learned, and having entirely and purely submitted their Understanding to God; or being Ignorant and unlearn'd, and having entirely resign'd themselves and their Affections to him, have receiv'd from him so great and so pure Lights, that nothing after the Holy Scripture, is comparable to their Writings, neither Fathers, nor Doctors, nor any thing else. Such are the greatest part of the Mystical Divines, and a great many Saints, and Holy illiterate Persons, where this is remarkable; that commonly, the more simple and unlearn'd they were, the more strong, pure, and shining were their Lights: not only because they were then out of all Danger of mingling any thing of the cloudy Activity of human Reason with them, but likewise because their Heart was more humble and simple, which is the fittest Disposition to partake of God's most singular Graces. I might give many Examples of this, but I will content my self with one only, and it shall be that of an illiterate Woman, an Instance of the most simple and lowest Kind imaginable; and yet I scarce believe that since the Apostles to this last Age wherein this Blessed Saint liv'd, I mean St. Catharine of Genoa, there ever was or could be any thing more Divine, more solid and sublime than her admirable Works. I am still amaz'd that those who have canoniz'd her and take her for a Saint, do not labour to inform themselves of the Truth and Will of God from such Divine Writings, which are the pure Lights of the Holy Spirit, rather than from a hundred either Fathers or Doctors, all whose prodigiously Voluminous Writings are not comparable to the twenty or thirty Sheets of which the Works of this divinely inspir'd and wonderfully bright Soul consist,

fist. But after all, whatever comparative Esteem they may be in, as those I am at present treating with have Veneration enough for her Person and Doctrine not to accuse 'em either of Impiety or Blasphemy, I will produce out of 'em some Testimonies that serve my present Purpose.

XIII. I shall give you some Passages out of her Life. XIII. *The Doctrine of a Saint that teaches God did all he possibly cou'd to save those that perish.*

“(a) God does not suffer those Souls to fall, that with their Free will do not consent to Sin, and he does let such fall as voluntarily consent to it: because having given us a Free will, he will not force nor constrain it. He therefore that falls into Sin, must take the whole blame to himself; because he alone is the Cause of it, and not God, who is always ready to assist us even after our Fall provided the Soul that has fallen will suffer it self to be assisted by corresponding and co-operating with the Divine Grace which continually calls and invites it to rise again out of Sin.

“(b) God does not leave knocking at the Heart of Man to enter and make good his Operations in it, nor can any complain that God has not continually knock'd and beat at the Door of his Heart: because without accepting of Persons he comes to all, and calls and draws us all to him, no more respecting the good than the bad. (c) God created Man for eternal Happiness with a Love unconceivably great. He gives him all the Means conducing to so noble an End with infinite Charity, Purity and Rectitude; so that he suffers him not to want any thing, and even after the Commission of never so heinous Crimes, he never fails to send him all necessary Inspirations, Warnings, and Punishments, to bring him to that State of Blessedness for which he made him with so ardent a Love: So that when Man shall after Death know all this, and shall see how he constantly refus'd to be led by the Divine Goodness, and that it was wholly owing to himself alone that he was not Happy, he will suffer much more from the Sorrow and Vexation of his having oppos'd the Divine Goodness than from all the other Torments of Hell.

(a) *Life of S. Cath. of Genoa,* Chap. XI.

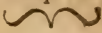
(b) *Ibid.* Ch. XIII.

(c) *Ibid.* Ch. XV.

“(a)

- (a) Ibid. Ch. XX. “ (a) When I observe with how great readiness God provides us all things necessary as well outward as inward for our Salvation, and that he takes so great care of our Affairs; and when on the contrary I see Man so busie about things not only useles but hurtful, and that at his Death God will say to him, *What could I have done for thee, O Man! that I have not done*: and he shall clearly see the Graces he has despis’d, and for which he shall be call’d to a severer Account than for all his other Sins: I am amaz’d, nor can I imagine or comprehend how Man can be so insensible as not to think on a thing of such mighty Importance.
- (b) Ibid. Chap. XXXIV. “ (b) Almighty God gives to All such Light and such Grace, that every one if he do but what is in his Power, may be saved if he will but give his Consent. O Free-will! thou art the Cause of great Good and great Evil! If thou but deny thy self for the Love of God, thou shalt quickly arrive at such a State of Freedom as thou shalt never fall from, and and shalt know that to serve God is truly to reign.
- (c) Ibid. Chap. XL. “ (c) Our Lord has said, *None can come to me except my Father draw him*; nor is God’s gracious Providence ever wanting to draw Men, saying, *I stand at the Door and knock*. But our Wickedness is so great, that shou’d God regard it, it wou’d be our highest Misery, for then he could never mind us nor do us any good; but he considers only his own infinite Mercy and Goodness, by which he endeavours to bring us to that happy End for which he made us. To effect this, he out of his mere Love produces in us all necessary Operations, thro’ which if we make good use of ’em, our Affairs shall go on successfully; if we do not, we shall be miserable at our Death, hearing from *Jesus* this Word, *O thou wicked Servant, what could I have done more for thee than I have done?* So that Man, tho’ never so malicious, shall not be able to find any Excuse: for thro’ God’s Assistance, who is always ready to help him, he may forsake his Wickedness: and say, *Thou, Lord, hast broken my Bonds in sunder, and I will offer Thee a Sacrifice of Praise*. I will also give some Passages out of her Dialogues.
- (d) Dial. I. Chap. V. “ (d) The Soul saw a kind Ray of Love issuing from this Divine



“ Divine Fountain, and darted towards Man as if it Chap. II.  
 “ wou’d utterly destroy him; and when it found an   
 “ Impediment, if it were possible for God to suffer Pain,  
 “ this Opposition it met with wou’d put him to the  
 “ greatest possible. This Ray seem’d to have no other  
 “ Business but to pierce the Soul, and that if the Soul  
 “ was not penetrated with it, it was only thro’ her own  
 “ Fault. For she perceiv’d this Ray encompassing her  
 “ on all sides to find Entrance, but the Soul blinded  
 “ with Self-love regarded it not: And when God sees  
 “ that a Soul damns it self, and that the Ray of his  
 “ Love cannot make Impression strong enough to enter  
 “ the Heart thro’ its Obstinacy, he seems to say, *The*  
 “ *Love which I bear to this Soul is so great, that I should*  
 “ *be glad never to forsake it. O ingrateful and harden’d*  
 “ *Soul! as to what depends on my Will, I can never be*  
 “ *willing thou shouldst be damn’d, so great a Love do I bear*  
 “ *thee; and were it possible for me to suffer for thee and*  
 “ *so to hinder it, I would do it; but it being impossible for*  
 “ *my pure Love, to abide with the least Imperfection, I am*  
 “ *forc’d to leave thee: and as thro’ me thou mightest have*  
 “ *been capable of all Happiness by thy Union with me, so*  
 “ *now being left of me thou hast made thy self susceptible of*  
 “ *all kind of Evil.*

“ (a) O the wonderful Work of this pure Love that (a) Dial. 2.  
 “ God gives to Man, to enable him to Work as far as Chap. V.  
 “ is necessary to come to that Perfection for which he  
 “ made him! He still affords him all necessary Grace  
 “ and Light, and does by Degrees increase it in such  
 “ Manner and Measure, that he never has more or less  
 “ than he should have: for had he less than he needed,  
 “ he might make a good Excuse for not co-operating  
 “ or working as he should, because he had not Grace  
 “ enough; and should he have too much, he would be  
 “ punish’d for failing to work.-----But because we are  
 “ cold and slothful in working, and because our Mind  
 “ and Instinct pushes us on to a hasty Attainment of  
 “ Perfection, we think *Grace fails* us, and does not an-  
 “ swer our Desires. Yet *it is not so*; on the contrary,  
 “ ’tis thro’ our Fault alone that we do not co-operate  
 “ with the Grace that is present to us, and this is the  
 “ Reason it is not increas’d. O wretched Man! how  
 “ can’st thou ever excuse thy self after such great Care

Chap. II. " and such great Love wherewith God has provided,  
 " and still incessantly does provide for thy Needs!  
 " Thou wilt see and know it better at the Hour of  
 " thy Death: but then thou wilt stand amaz'd and  
 " dumb, and being fully convinc'd of this Truth, thou  
 " wilt have nothing to say for thy self, and wilt be  
 " terribly confounded for not having willingly wrought  
 " with such mighty Assistance, such abundant Grace,  
 " such boundless Love and Care which thy Lord had  
 " of thee.

(a) Dial. 3. " (a) O Soul ('tis God speaks) know that I am the  
 Chap. I. " immutable God, and that before I created Man I  
 " lov'd him with an *infinite Love*, with a pure, sim-  
 " ple, and causeless Love; and that I cannot but love  
 " what I made and predestinated to my Glory, every  
 " one in their Degree. I have likewise plentifully fur-  
 " nish'd him with Means proper to the Attainment of  
 " his End, both with natural Gifts and *supernatural*  
 " *Graces*, which *shall never fail on my part*; on the con-  
 " trary, *I do encompass and beset him with my infinite*  
 " *Love* by divers Ways and Means to reduce him un-  
 " der my Guidance; and I find nothing that resists me  
 " but the Free-will which I gave him, against which I do  
 " by Love continually strive till he at last gives it up  
 " and presents it to me; and when I have receiv'd and  
 " accepted it, I by little and little strengthen it by se-  
 " cret Operations and by a loving Care; nor do I ever  
 " leave it till I have brought it to its design'd End.

These are some Shreds of the Divine Doctrine of this Holy Soul, as well upon the Universality of Grace as upon the Extent of God's Power and Providence in doing all it could to hinder Souls from perishing, and to lead 'em to eternal Happiness. They who have a mind to see the same things in Substance apply'd to *Judas*, need but read the sixth Meditation upon the inward Grievings of *Jesus Christ*, join'd to the *spiritual Combat*, which I am sure, they, for whose Sake I have made this Digression, will not suspect either of Blasphemy or Error.

And 'tis strange to me to see Men go to exclude *Judas* from all share in God's Care and saving Providence upon this Reason, because it is said, *none of Christ's Disciples were lost except the Son of Perdition*, that

(b) Jo. 17. the Scripture might be fulfilled (b): For, not to say that this

this Clause, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, may better be referr'd to the foregoing Words, *of those which thou gavest me have I lost none* (a), than to that exceptive Clause, *save only the Son of Perdition*: but suppose it referr'd as they would have it, what says the Scripture concerning this in that Psalm relating to *Judas* (b)? It says, that he *lov'd him*; that he *pray'd for him*, *did him good*, and took him for *his Friend* (c): but that this wicked Wretch rather *lov'd Cursing than Blessing*, and therefore it should be far from him. Therefore he was the Son of the Curse, only because he would not correspond with God's Designs and Care which he took to make him a Son of Benediction. Besides, we are not to fancy that this Psalm points determinately at the Person of *Judas* as *Judas*; but it is there said in general, that the Devil sought out for an Instrument to betray *Jesus Christ*, and that he should not fail to find one. The Person of *Judas* was undetermin'd to this Fact, and it was himself that freely made himself the Object of this Prediction. But enough of this Digression.

Come we now to the third Consideration (d) we intended to make upon the Divine Providence for the Salvation of Man after his Fall, and after God's Design to recover him out of it. In this Point are center'd almost all the greatest and chiefest Difficulties in Divinity. But I may venture to say, that excepting two or three that I have not yet fully clear'd, there are few but may be easily solv'd by what I have said in this and the preceding Tracts. Yet, I intend upon occasion of what Difficulties may yet remain, to propose from the very Foundation the whole System of Divine Providence after Man's Fall, which I will begin to do in the next Chapter.

Chap. II.  
(a) See Isa. 8. 18.  
Heb. 2. 13.  
(b) Psal. 109. 4, 5.  
(c) Ibid. v. 17.

(d) Supr. Chap. I. § 3.



## C H A P. III.

*Of the Divine Providence for the Salvation of Man after his Fall. What Remedies it offers and opposes to the Indispositions into which he is fallen. The occasional Cause of Grace. The Decree of Election.*

I. Things  
to be con-  
sider'd.

(a) Above  
Chap. I.  
n. 5.



I. O give some Order to this important Matter of the Providence of God towards Man after his Fall, I will consider it with regard to the (a) five things which I have touch'd in speaking of the same Divine Providence before the Fall.

II. One  
thing to be  
suppos'd,  
and five  
other to be  
consider'd  
afterwards.

II. We suppose that after Man's Fall God resumes or still continues his Design of communicating himself to Man. and of making him Partaker of his own infinite Blessedness. Upon this, let us see what Divine Providence has done, as well in general as in particular, with relation to these five things which this Design of God either supposes or includes. (1.) The Subject of this Blessedness. (2.) The Inability of the Subject to cause it. (3.) God's Tender of it, and of the Means to attain it. (4.) The Admission, or the occasional Cause of the Admission of this Tender in the Creature. (5.) and lastly, the Action of God in the Subject that has admitted his Offers.

III. (1.)  
The Subject  
of Happi-  
ness, its  
Faculties  
and its  
Liberty re-  
main still  
after the  
Fall.

III. (1.) As the Soul is immortal, and even the Body too, as it is the Work of God, and likewise Nature and all the chief Faculties of things; so also the Subject which God destin'd to Happiness, and which he made of a Nature capable to receive in it as well the eternal Happiness of Light and Joy purely divine, as the accessory one of material Beauties and Delights; this Subject, I say, which is Man, always subsists and continues after its Fall. He lost not that natural and subjective Capacity which he had for Happiness, tho' he did lose (as I shall shew presently) the proximate Dispositions and Fittnesses for it. He has still the Faculties of Understanding, Will and Liberty; of producing

ducing his like, of disposing of his own Acts, &c. Chap. III which Faculties he could not lose without ceasing to be what he subjectively and essentially is. His very Body, tho' encompass'd and cover'd with Corruption, yet does not eternally perish. In a Word, all that was given Man as part of his Nature, cannot, what'ere he do, be taken from him either by God or himself: For his Liberty extends not to the giving or forming his own Nature, nor by Consequence to the taking it away, or the giving himself another: neither can they be taken from him by God, he having given them to him as an absolute and irrevocable Gift. We must not therefore imagine that God took away from Man after his Sin the Liberty of his natural Acts, to exert or apply them as he pleas'd; that he has determin'd that Man shall produce such and such a Desire, that he shall manage himself so or so, much less that he shall beget just such a Number of Individuals his like, and such and such Persons in such and such Circumstances of Time and Place. Things do not go thus. Man is still free in relation to these things, tho' hereafter we shall take notice of some special Cases which may be look'd upon as Exceptions with reference to such as resign their Liberty up to God.

IV. Now all that has been said is equally true in respect of all Men without exception, if we consider them either as all fallen in their first Parent, or every one in particular for himself. All these Subjects continue always so far naturally equal and invariable. *IV. And this in respect of all.* *Judas* as well as *St. Peter* has a spiritual Nature capable to lodge in it God and eternal Happiness; he has likewise, as well as he, an Understanding, a Will and a Body, and other Faculties capable of the same Objects, tho' not proximately, for Reasons to be just now given.

V. (2.) Which are these, because the Subject created for Happiness is indeed incapable of causing it to itself, as well after as before the Fall; but after the Fall he is, as was said, proximately incapable of admitting it, indispos'd and chang'd as he is by wicked Acts and Habits that have given him wicked Inclinations, and subjected him to the Slavery and Tyranny of saving

E 3

good. (1.) His Slavery to Satan. (2.) The Corruption of his own Faculties. (3.) And that of corporeal Nature.

Chap. III. of Satan, and to all the malignant Impressions of corrupt Nature. I suppose the Proofs of these Truths are seen in the foregoing Tracts; and so it will be enough here briefly to mark them only so far as they enter the Structure and Connexion of the System of Providence.

We must take Notice therefore that the Subject God created and design'd for Happiness, and who is of a Nature capable of enjoying it, is at present become, *First*, a Companion, or rather Servant and Slave of the Devil; as well because he has submitted his Liberty to him by consenting to his Demands and Temptations, as by turning away from God his Liberty and Faculties, he has fix'd them upon corrupt and mean things, for which his Heart was not made. This Disorder is the Devil's Element where this malicious Spirit tyrannically governs and rules all he meets in it. For the Devil is united to this corrupt Element almost as closely as the Soul is to the Body; and he disposes of it at Pleasure in Man, when he has his Consent either actual or virtual, when Man does not resist him. For this Reason it is, that the Liberty of every Sinner consider'd in *Adam*, and out of the Grace of God, is a Companion and Friend of the Liberty of the Devil, who having Access to it, never quits it, nor fails continually to draw it to all that is pleasing to Satan. They are like two Drunkards or Whoremongers well met, and fitted with Opportunities of Time and Place to satisfy their vile Passions. He that is the most wicked and debauch'd certainly solicits his Companion to all that's ill, persuades and carries him where-e're he pleases. He acts on his Understanding by a thousand Imaginations and Thoughts, that he presents to it, on his Will by mixing himself with his Desires, awakening and heating them, particularly by the Intervention of his Body, Blood, Humours and Spirits; and all this by means of that Disorder and Corruption which Man by Sin brought upon himself, his Body and all external Nature. Hence all the Motions of corrupt Nature are the Vehicles wherein the Devil conveys his Will to all the World, and to all Sinners (*a*). The Devil moves them in the most inward Parts of their Veins, Arteries and Bowels for the Advancement of his Kingdom, almost like Engines, and without their per-

(*a*) See the  
Oecon.  
of Sin.  
Chap. 12.  
§ 12, 13.  
14. as also  
the Oecon.  
before the  
Incarna-  
tion Chap.  
3. § 4, 5, 6.



perceiving it. Hence the Scripture styles him, *The Prince of this World* (a); and the Members of Man's Body, *the Instruments and Weapons of Unrighteousness*, (a) John 14. 30. subjected and enslav'd to him whom they obey (b).

You see here the *first* Indisposition to be observ'd in the immortal Subject which God created for eternal Happiness, and designs to bring to it. The *Second* is the actual and habitual Perverseness of his Desire, which plants and roots in Man Ways wholly perverted, and forms in him a way of desiring and willing, of producing and directing his Acts altogether dark, carnal, selfish and interested in the proposing his End, and the Ways and Means of executing it. The *Third* is, the Disorders of his Body and its Humours, and the malignant Impressions of corrupt Nature upon this his distemper'd and wicked Body. (b) Rom. 6. 13, 16.

VI. I say it again, and can never say it sufficiently, nor the Reader think of it enough, and would to God our Eyes were sufficiently open, and our Hearts sensible fully to understand and feel it! that all Men since the Fall, and as born of the Sinner *Adam*, and till regenerated in the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, have these five Qualifications for eternal Life, viz. (1.) They are the Companions, Friends, and even the Slaves of Satan, who inseparably attends them, rules and governs their Liberty which they have resign'd up to him, their Mind and Heart, their Passions and Imaginations, their Senses and Motions, their Words and Actions. (2.) That tho' there were nothing of all this, and the Devil did not act upon them to make them worse, yet is their Heart and Desire become a hellish Abyss that breaths out nothing but Stench and Abomination, whence there cannot proceed so much as one Thought that is not devilish, nor one Motion that is not perverse, wicked and abominable in the Sight of God: For this Heart is now nothing but a perpetual Spring of Filth and Ordure, that continually casts out nothing but impure and hellish Fumes, till God by his most holy Grace kill this wicked Heart, and put in its room in the Soul a new Principle and a new Spirit, which this wicked and criminal Heart had driven away to let the Devil enter into it, and to imagin, exert and direct its own Acts according to its own disorderly Fancy and

VI. Man's  
Impotence  
to Good,  
arising  
from these  
three cor-  
rupt Sour-  
ces.

Chap. III. Self Love. Add to this (3.) that tho' this Heart of corrupt Man were almost grown entirely brutish and stupid, so that it could not with any Freedom dispose of any thing but the Motions of its own Body, yet the Corruption and Disorder of his Body and of those that act upon it from without, would not suffer him to lead but a meer beastly Life, the most disorder'd, miserable and confus'd imaginable.

VII. *The State of Man after his Fall, and before his Regeneration.*

VII. This is in truth and without exception the very Disposition and State of every Man by virtue of that Birth he takes from *Adam* the Sinner, without the Grace of God, and before his Regeneration. If there have been Persons holy from their Birth, it was not by virtue of their being born of Flesh and Blood, and of the Will of Man; but because their Parents being themselves holy offer'd up their Children as soon as born to the Holy Ghost, praying him to sanctifie 'em, which Prayers the Holy Ghost heard and ratify'd by his Divine Operations. But this is not what we at present discourse of; but of what Men are by virtue of their meer sinful Birth, and before God's Grace and their Regeneration. Tho' they should begin to return to God, and to have some good Motions, and to do some good Works, yet till they have perfectly renounc'd Corruption and the Devil, and are perfectly dead to their wicked Heart and Desires; till they do perfectly deny their natural Motions and all the Impressions which their own Body and all corrupt Nature makes upon them; till then they are immediately incapable, I say not, to do, but even to receive and possess the pure Good; they are not yet so much as a *rasa tabula*, a Subject prepar'd and fitted for the Light and Peace of God. They have indeed, supposing them in the good Way and advancing forward in it, many sorts of Goods in them; but all as yet impure and mix'd with Evil, Error and Seduction, and Deceitfulness of Heart, with Darkness, with the Devil and his Element; so that before the perfect Death of the Old Man no Man living ought to trust his own Heart, nor to justify himself, seeing he has still within him a three-fold Hell, the Devil, the Corruption of his own Heart, and that of his Body and Nature, or of the World and the Universe. What therefore will become of such as  
do

do not so much as think of Grace and its Inspirations, Chap. III. and so cannot by the help of it resist the continual Productions which these three infernal Sources are throwing up in them? I see no Difference between Men in this State and the Devil himself; only that these are insensible of their Evils, and have during this Life an Opportunity and Means of Amendment.

VIII. I have not at all exaggerated in what I have said concerning Man's Incapacity, I do not say to cause, but even to admit and to receive immediately real Happiness. He is as utterly incapable of it as Hell is of being Paradise: For he has within him a diabolical Hell or Satan himself, a Hell of the Corruption of his own Heart, and a Hell of the Corruption of his Body and of Nature, out of which there cannot flow the least Spark of Goodness. O blind and wretched Man! thou scoffest at these important Truths, because thou pretendest to discover no such three-fold Hell within thee, nor do'st yet find thy self tormented in it, not considering that the Goodness of God moving him to grant thee an Opportunity to work out thy Salvation in quiet and by degrees and measures suiting thy Weakness, does also mix with thy Malignity a great many good things, and does for this End stupify for a time the Quickness of thy Sensibility, and the Pains of thy triple Hell, and hides them from thee; which unless he did thou wouldst die a thousand times with Fright and Despair at their first Discovery, and wouldst be overwhelm'd with Torments inexpressible, should their Activity be but once awaken'd in thee. Thou shalt see this at thy Death, when it will be too late to think of escaping, unless during this Life thou hast made it thy chief Business to say to God Night and Day by the Sighs of an humble Heart eschewing Evil, and breathing after divine Grace; *Look thou upon me, O Lord my God, and hear my Prayers, enlighten mine Eyes that I sleep not the Sleep of Death; lest mine Enemy (Satan) say, I have prevail'd against him, and mine Adversaries rejoice at my falling into Perdition. My Trust is in thy Grace, and my Heart shall rejoice in thy Salvation* (a). This is indeed the great, the capital and universal Disease of the Men of these Times; they neither see nor know the depth of their Corruption; they do not so much

VIII.

*Men's Insensibility in their universal Miseries, and their diabolical Malice in their Blindness.*

(a) Psal. 13. 5.



Chap. III. much as believe that all they are, and all they do, all they think, desire and speak, is abominable and execrable before God, so long as it comes from the poison'd Source of their Heart, without an entire renouncing of themselves and of all that is in them, and giving themselves up to the Instruction and Government of God's Holy Spirit, without which we cannot do nor will the least Good in the World. Having elsewhere prov'd these Truths, as necessary as they are, I shall enlarge no more at present. Whoever has a mind to see them in a Light the most lively and divine that can be wish'd for, let him consult the Works of Mrs. Bourignon, and especially, *The Renovation of the Gospel Spirit, Antichrist discover'd, the Light of the World, and the Touchstone*. For I, for my Part, freely own that I never yet saw any one since the beginning of the World, to whom God has discover'd more clearly, livelily and strongly and plainly the great Corruption of Man, than he has in our Days by this excellent Instrument of his Holy Spirit; and 'tis nothing but this Detection of Wickedness that makes all the Wicked and Hypocrites displeas'd at her, their proud Heart not enduring to be humbled and confounded, nor to hate and deny themselves. The Devil too, their good Friend, that is lodg'd in their corrupt Heart (as was said before) hating to be thus expos'd and laid open, has found out an Expedient by setting his Slaves on work with his two old Engines of Lying and Violence, against the divine Light and the holy Soul that publish'd it; I say, Lying and Violence, with which he abundantly inspires the Wicked of all sorts, Ignorant and Learned, who yet never fail'd to labour in the Service of their Lord and Master, that Murderer, Persecutor, Lyar and Slanderer from the beginning, who will one Day pay them their Wages unless they undo what they have maliciously done for him against the most divine, clear and solid Truth that ever appear'd in the World. But let us not leave our Subject.

IX. The  
Difference  
between  
Man's Im-  
potence to  
Good before the Fall, and after it.

IX. I come to it again, and end my second Consideration (which was upon the Incapacity of the Subject which God designs to make happy) with these two Conclusions. The one, that as Man was incapable before

before the Fall to cause his own Happiness, so likewise is he since : the other, that whereas Man before the Fall was not proximately, or, if I may so say, positively incapable to receive God, to desire him, to be united to him and possess him, he is since his Sin proximately and positively incapable of it, and that upon these three Grounds, *first*, because he is united to the Devil, God's Enemy ; *secondly*, because his Heart is become an eternal Fund of Corruption ; and *thirdly*, as to his Body, he is subjected to all the Irregularities and Disorders of the great and little World.

X. (3.) Let us now see what Providence has done in the *third*, as also in the fourth and fifth things, which are yet to be consider'd. As God before the Fall of Man was pleas'd to make it his constant and universal Rule to present to Man after a general and common Manner, the constant and universal, and yet the most singular Act of the Light of his *Word* and the Motions of his *Holy Spirit*, for the beatitude of his Soul, and likewise to present unto him the external Light and Benedictions of Nature for the good of his Body ; and did by his Divine Concourse and Prevention accompany this Offer of the beatifying Object to the Subject he design'd to make happy : in like manner after the Fall, God being pleas'd to continue his Design of making the miserable Subject that was fallen, happy, made himself a Rule and an unchangeable and universal Law of this Will and Good-pleasure of his, which is this, that he will actually present to Man, as long as he lives in this State of Tryal, his Light and Divine Motions to his Interiour in a lively and constant, universal and singular, in a preventing and concurring manner, and to do the same in proportion to his Exteriour, by the offer of the Light and Blessings and support of Nature. (a) By doing us good, giving us Rain from Heaven and fruitful Seasons, filling our Hearts with Food and Gladness; (b) determining the Times and Habitations of the People, that they might seek after God, if happily they might find him, since he is not far from us, for in him we live, and move, and have our Being.

Chap. III.

X. (3.) The Providence of God does after the Fall universally and constantly supply the Soul and Body with their beatifying and suitable Objects.

(a) Acts 14. 16, 17.

(b) Ibid. Chap. 17. 26, 27.

XI. *New  
Graces  
which  
God's Pro-  
vidence  
gives to  
Man, after  
his Fall,  
both spiri-  
tual and  
corporeal,  
for his Sal-  
vation.*

XI. Nor was the Divine Providence content to do barely such things which of his Wisdom and Goodness he would have done had not Man sinn'd; but moreover, seeing Man was actually and continually distracted and carried to Ill, as well by the Spirit of the Devil that always stuck close to him after his Sin, as by the very Corruption of his own wicked Heart, and by the Disorders of his Body and of Nature; this merciful and Provident Charity, pardoning for *Jesus Christ's* sake Man's Demerit, and taking no notice of his Wickedness, has join'd his Holy Spirit to the Spirit of every Man that comes into the World; not indeed by a Conjunction unitive, of Friendship, of Peace, of Complacency, Inhabitation and Concord; but yet by an Union objective, calling, knocking and contradicting the Spirit of the Devil and its Suggestions, and drawing Man to Good. And this that he may hold out against the Devil (who is in Man whilst a Sinner) and may not be over-power'd by him, but may at last be enabled quite to expel him *(a)*.

*(a) See the  
Oecon. of  
the Resto-  
rat. before  
the In-  
carn. Ch.  
VII. § 11.  
as also the  
six first Let-  
ters of Mrs.  
B.'s Funer-  
al of false  
Divinity,  
Part 4.  
where  
these great  
Truths are  
divinely  
well pro-  
pos'd.*

And this good Spirit, join'd to Man's Spirit, instructs him, whether he will or no, gives him good Desires and good Motions, shews him a glimpse of his Divine Light, of Good and Evil, draws him to the one, and inspires him with an Abhorrence and Dislike of the other; that he may make Head against the Corruption of his Heart, which otherwise would hurry him blindly and without all Remorse to all sorts of Wickedness. Lastly, to oppose the Violence of the Corruption of Nature, God does as it were by force impress upon Nature both by his immediate Blessing, and by the means of his good Angels, benign Influences: he guides and governs it; and acts likewise kindly upon the Imagination, the Humours, the Spirits, the Blood and Passions of Man's Body, as well by doing so to resist the Disorders that the Devil would ever be raising in Nature by means of his Element of Corruption, which is intermixt and united with it, as to hinder, or regulate those which Man's corrupt Heart (who was to have govern'd Nature, but since his Fall was grown unfit for that Charge) might raise in it, and which it certainly does as soon as ever it is left to it self. God does and presents all these things to Man by way of Objects, as well spiritual



spiritual as corporeal, and they act upon him as long as the time of his Probation lasts. Chap. III.

XII. (4.) In the *fourth* Place, as Divine Providence before the Sin of Man, had establish'd the Liberty of the Soul the occasional and admittive Cause of the efficacious and unitive Presence of Divine Objects, which Liberty of his he was pleas'd neither to determine nor limit; in like manner after the Fall, God was pleas'd to bring Man back to Happiness by making immutably and universally the same Liberty of Man the occasional and admittive Cause of the Entrance and interior Insinuation of his good Spirit, of his Inspirations and Motions, and of his efficacious Acting, and in the end of his most pure and most sublime Operations. So that if the Liberty (prevented as it is, and the Faculties by the Calls and Stroaks of God) will turn away its Desire from all that is not God, and turn it and offer it up to God that he may operate in it, God will introduce into the Soul his Light and his Goodness with all his saving Operations. And that none might have any reason to complain, God has been pleas'd not to determine either by any antecedent Decree, or by any preventing or determining Concourse, or by any infallible, absolute or necessary Foresight, the Liberty of any Man, or its Acts. As to that, it is all one both after and before the Fall. The System is always the same in Substance. I will not forget by and by to handle the Difficulties relating to this Matter.

XII. (4.)  
After the  
Fall Pro-  
vidence  
has estab-  
lish'd Man's  
Liberty as  
the occasi-  
onal and  
admittive  
Cause of  
the Divine  
Grace,  
which Li-  
berty of his  
is wholly  
undeter-  
min'd.

XIII. So that all that Divine Providence has left Man to do as his Duty and as the whole Business of his Life, is this, that the Liberty of Man turn away his Desire from all that is not God, or rather, that he consent to God's turning it away by his good Motions, and that he turn and offer it up to God, with himself and all that belongs to him. Then God will do all the rest. But unless Man do this, God will never supply this Defect, nor make him to do it. This is Man's Business, his proper and indispensable Task, which he cannot neglect without damning himself for Ever; and by fondly flattering himself in this Point go to Hell in a Feather-Bed. There is nothing in the World of greater Truth and Importance to us. This Duty is the Marrow and Quintessence of true Religion, of the true

XIII. The  
only, indis-  
pensable,  
and sacred  
Duty of  
Man in  
this Life.

Chap. III. true Worship and Service that God requites of Man.

Our whole Duty consists in this, in turning away from all outward things, and from all Evil, and in entering into our Interior, and there praying the good Spirit of God who is there present, and desires to abide and act there, that he would be pleas'd to strive and fight against our Enemies, our selves, our own and Nature's Corruption, and against the Devil, who is truly in us as long as we are in Sin : In saying with *David*, to the God of the Heart (a), *Deliver me from mine Enemies ; for I flee unto Thee to save me : teach me to do thy Will, for thou art my God ; let thy Holy Spirit lead me in the right Way !* Whoever shall accustom himself to this holy Worship, and shall obstinately, as I may say, persist in this holy Exercise, shall at last see in due time the Salvation and Redemption of the Lord.

(a) Psal.

143. 9, 10.

XIV. (5.) XIV. (5.) For, in the *fifth* Place, as God before the Fall had establish'd it for a Truth, for a Rule, for a Providence Decree universal, impartial and immutable, that he would efficaciously and savingly communicate himself, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and his Divine Acts, to the Soul, proportionably and so far as the Liberty should turn its Desires and Faculties toward God ; so likewise after the Fall, God, to restore Man's Happiness and to furnish all things necessary to that End by his Divine Providence, has decreed (and here is the Decree of Election) has, I say, decreed and establish'd this for an immutable, impartial, and universal Rule and Truth, that he will elect, take, possess, enlighten and rejoice efficaciously, savingly, and unitively, and at last, (to speak with the Mysticks) transformatively such Souls as shall turn themselves, their Desires and all their Faculties towards him ; and that he will insinuate himself, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, God blessed for Ever, into them ; and will in them produce his divine and beatifick Operations, so far and in such Measures as the Soul shall turn it self to him. Here shall be no Exception or Change ; and what was said before concerning God's Procedure before the Fall, is applicable to our present Case.

XV. I have not much enlarg'd upon these three last Considerations, viz. the Objects which God presents, the Liberty that receives 'em, and God's Correspondence therewith: not only because I have already sufficiently prov'd and explain'd 'em (as to the Substance of 'em) in the Treatises concerning the Restoration of Man and the Operation of God; but also because these three things, viz. the Offers of God to Man, and Man's Admission of 'em, and God's Acting or Correspondence upon such Admission, are things so complicated together, that what we are to say of 'em cannot be said in treating of 'em each singly and a-part. They must be consider'd and join'd together: and that is what I intend to do in the following Chapter, not to give a new Explication of them, but only so far to touch 'em as shall be necessary with respect to the Difficulties that relate to their Universality, Impartiality, and Man's indeterminate Liberty about 'em.

XV. *The Design of the following Chapters.*

## CHAP. IV.

*A System, and some Principles of Providence relating to the Foresight of Good and Evil, after the Fall of Man. That God desires the Evil he foresees may not come to pass; and that all the possible Good which he foresees, may come to pass: which he also is pleas'd to promote. The special Object of Providence.*

I.  OR the full Comprehension of the Oeconomy of Divine Providence to save Man after the Fall, it is necessary to call to mind the Truths demonstrated in the first and second Treatises, as also those just insisted on. (1.) The first is this, That God by himself alone in his indivisible and  
 of Providence after the Fall 1. God's Sufficiency in his own Eternity.  
 2. His various and arbitrary Manifestations of himself in himself.

I. *Some gradual Considerations for coming to the true Notion of the Oeconomy*



Chap. IV. and invariable Eternity is sufficient to himself. (2.)  
 ~~~~~ That God having a mind to manifest himself to himself, out of the Form (as I may say) of his Eternity, by various Contemplations variously rang'd, was indifferent as to this way of Manifestation of himself to himself, and might do it in what manner he pleas'd without determining or foreseeing all the future Modes and Rangings, as I may say, of his divine arbitrary Contemplations, thro' the whole Duration of Eternity : For all such orderly Determination and Foresight of the Manners of the Divine Acts and Sports are not only indifferent to God, who without these arbitrary Modalities might have rested satisfy'd in the indivisible Center of his pure Eternity ; but are indeed contrary to his Liberty and Power.

(3.) *The Indifference of God either to think of, decree, or guide or foresee other things.* (3.) The third Truth is this, that if God were free and indetermin'd as to these things *within himself*, and were not pleas'd to foresee or determine their Manners nor their Consequences, or the marshalling of their Combinations ; much more was he free to sally *out of himself*, to think or not to think of any Ideas, to think of such or of others ; to think or decree to give them real Existence or not ; to think and decree to give 'em Liberty or not ; to think of determining their Conduct, or not ; to think and will to foresee all their Acts and all their Combinations or not. This was all indifferent to a God that was self-sufficient by the eternal and indivisible Thought and Possession of himself alone, and who might, if he pleas'd, have exercis'd his Liberty in himself ; and with regard to himself alone without thinking of any thing else, as was said before.

(4.) *Actions of Man not determin'd nor foreseen.* (4.) A *fourth* Truth is this, that God having created Man free in his Light, and in his Love, did foresee in general the greatest Part, or if you will, all the possible and positive Manners wherein Man might determine his Liberty and his Acts ; but that he was not pleas'd either to determine them, or to foresee them as determin'd ; much less to determine or determinately to foresee that Man would turn away from God, and that he should do so by such and such Ways and Actions all determin'd and foreseen.

(5) The

(5.) The *fifth*, that God having created the Heaven and the Earth, the Stars and the Elements, had impress'd upon them Motions and Order as 'twere mechanically and brutally regulated; so that he could immediately discover all their Combinations and future Effects, they not having in them a Principle of governing themselves freely and of choice. Tho' I have not insisted upon this Truth, and which likewise is not disputed by any, yet have I in divers Places sufficiently made it out; and it will be of use to me hereafter.

(5.) *Natural Motions and Events to be foreseen.*

(6.) The *sixth*, that God having subjected to Man's Liberty the Government of the World, and of the Stars too and the Elements; he might indeed have foreseen the greatest part or all the possible Ways and Manners wherein Man might dispose of 'em, and what Effects would thence follow; but that nevertheless it was not his Pleasure to determine or decree 'em, no nor to foresee 'em as determinately future.

(6.) *But not as subjected to Man.*

(7.) The *seventh*, that Man having fallen into Sin, has lost his Dominion over the World, and the Power of disposing of the heavenly and elementary Bodies at his Will; so that the Government of the World, as to what Power Man has over it, is again become almost brute and mechanical, the Stars and Elements acting mechanically upon his Body and Imagination, and they upon his Soul, let him do what he can. Not but that the Devil has a Hand here, and does but too much govern at his Will ever since Man's corrupting the World; but then he does it not by opposing but following and swelling the Tide of the corrupt Inclinations of Nature. By this it is plain, that it is an easie Matter to foresee determinately enough what will befall Man's Body; what Sensations and Impressions his Soul will thence receive and that it will thereby grow more and more Miserable and Wicked; yet without determining precisely in what Manner it will become so.

(7.) *The general Events of Man fallen may be foreseen.*

(8.) For, (and this is the *eighth* Truth remarkable.) Man, altho' fallen, and not yet taken again into Favour, is still free. So that, supposing nothing but Ill in him, and nothing but Evil Objects presenting themselves to him from without after his Fall, (which would have

(8.) *But not determinately, or to be determined.*

Chap. IV. been his Case) yet may he by his Liberty diversly apply his Faculties, his Imagination, his Mind, his Passions of Sorrow, Rage and Transport, his Blasphemies and disorderly Motions to these Objects a thousand different Ways, which cannot without Absurdity be said to be determin'd by God, no nor so much as to be determinately foreseen by him. God to be Omnipotent, Omniscient and Over-ruling has great need indeed to foresee, to determine, nay particularly to predetermine all the abominable and blasphemous Thoughts, Motions and Disorders of the Souls and Bodies of the damn'd! Would not this be a ghastly Idea? And yet by the Principles of some, he must as particularly do all this as he does whatever is most under his Government, and even as much or more than he does his own proper Acts. If this be true, I know not what we are to think dreadful and abominable: if it be not, the common Doctrine of Determination and Prevision is stark nought and groundless.

(9.) *The Conduct of Man may with a kind of Certainty be determinately foreseen from the Principle of Habits.*

(9.) But I shall remark to you a *ninth* Truth that will carry us yet farther. Man being separated from God by Sin, and consider'd before God's receiving him to Grace, having no longer any good in him, and being united to the Devil and to corrupt Nature, necessarily receives Evil Impressions from himself, from the Devil and from Nature. By his Liberty he may receive 'em, as I said, in different Manners: but as these Manners are infinite, and some opposite to others, Man in Fact and in the Application does actually determine himself to some in particular, and fixes upon them and leaves the rest. So, his corrupt Fund and Heart is such and such away inclin'd, produces such and such Acts; and these Acts strengthen their Root and pass into Habits. On the other side, as the Devil, who observes the Inclinations and bent of Man's Heart, and the malignant Impressions of corporeal Nature to second 'em, always tempts Man after such and such a particular Manner, he also contracts a Habit of following such and such Temptations of the Devil, and of practising too afterwards of his own Accord without the Devil's tempting him. Lastly, the malignant Influences of the Stars, of the Elements, of his Body, and his Humours, acting as it were mechanically in
one

one certain Way on his Soul, the Soul by yielding thereto, turns this particular Act of yielding into a habit, or into one certain Vice. Now it is well known that Habits are a kind of second Nature, that is to say, a kind of necessary Principle necessarily producing such and such Acts, especially when this Principle is grown quick and active, and fortify'd in its Root and Acts by so urgent and fierce an Associate as the Devil is, and when External Objects and corrupt and corporeal Means are presented to him. See Man now, habituated as he is to certain wicked Inclinations, to certain Vices and Temptations of his own Heart, and of the Devil and corrupt Nature; see him I say now, in a State wherein the Substance and even the principal Circumstances of what he will do may be determin'd and foreseen particularly with a kind of Certainty and Necessity of Consequence natural and infallible. If the thing be of it self possible, doubtless it is so, to God who needs only to will to discover what he pleases of it, to foresee it certainly by this Act alone of his Will.

II. Moreover, this Certainty there is in Habits to produce some certain Actions, is not an absolute and physical Necessity that cannot, absolutely speaking, be chang'd; but is a Necessity which we may call *Moral*, that cannot be chang'd without great Difficulty, and sometimes more difficultly than a physical Necessity; this being to be hinder'd by the Power of God, whereas the other when it is obstinately maintain'd by the Liberty is no Object of Divine Power. For nothing can change the Liberty nor hinder the Determination or Effects on which it is obstinately bent: Nevertheless, the Liberty being free, it may, notwithstanding all Previzion, absolutely speaking, vary 'em; yet the force of Habits, of Temptations and Vices, is the Cause that this does so seldom happen. I do not here speak of a change of Ill into Good, but only of the change of one Ill into another; of the change of one ill Action or ill Way, into another ill Action or ill Way. For this is enough for my Purpose to note from the very Source how the Wickednesses and Sins of Men may be foreseen particularly, determinately, with Certainty, and as things Necessary; and yet there may be no such thing as absolute Certainty concerning these

Chap. IV


II. This Certainty }
 is not a
 physical
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 ways be
 ratify'd.

Chap. IV. particular Events, but only a Moral one, but such as almost always happens. There are many other things that concur here, whereof we shall speak as our Method brings us to the Consideration of 'em.

III. Certain Punishments may be foreseen and foretold to Sinners, but conditionally and only with moral Certainty.

III. As then there is nothing more certain than this Truth, that God alone is the Source of all Good ; so is there nothing more certain than this other Truth, that Man divided from God by Vice and such and such Disorders, will at last find himself overwhelm'd with such and such painful Sensations, with such Mischiefs, Plagues and Sorrows, as are the natural and necessary Consequents of these Disorders, as has been prov'd elsewhere. Therefore one may foresee and foretell with Certainty and Particularity such and such Evils to such and such Sinners when one knows their evil Deeds and ill Habits, and the System, as I may say, of the Disorders of Nature. But such Prediction or Foresight being grounded only upon that of the evil Works of Man, it appears, *first*, that it is of its own Nature Conditional, however absolutely it be denounc'd ; *secondly*, that the Certainty of it is only Moral, and not physical and absolutely determinate.

IV. What God foresaw of Man after his Fall and before all Consideration of Grace.

IV. See then what God did foresee of Man after his Fall, and before he shew'd him Mercy ; not only Sins and Miseries in general, but also some certain Vices, some certain Evil Works and Habits, and some certain Miseries ensuing ; but with such Certitude as was only Moral as to the Particulars, whereas it was natural and necessary as to the Event. to the continuance and increase of Evil in general, supposing God had left Man in his Sin without shewing him Mercy. But in Case God should be pleas'd to show him Grace, things would then put on another Face, as I am going to shew.

V. God desires the Evil he foresees may not come to pass.

V. All these things. these Malignities and future Miseries of Man, whereof God foresees the Event in a certain and determinate Manner, as was said, were highly displeasing to God. So far is any Foresight or Decree of God from being the Cause of the Futurition of these things, or God from desiring they should so happen, that on the quite contrary, when he is pleas'd to look on them and to consider the necessary and morally determinate Consequences of 'em, he does it with the

the highest Abhorrence and an infinite Disallowance Chap. IV. both of the Evils and of their Event. And 'tis this supreme Aversion of his that makes him desire that what he foresees might never happen. This is not contradictory nor repugnant to the Fore-knowledge of God: on the contrary, as to the Foresight of Sin, it is natural and necessary to the most Holy Being not to foresee it without wishing what it foresees may never come to pass. For Sin and Misery is nothing else but something that is repugnant to the Will and Happiness of God, to which the Will of God is also reciprocally opposite. Therefore, to foresee Sin and Misery and their happening, is, as to God, to foresee a thing which he disapproves and wishes were not, nor ever would be.

VI. Whatever also the Event afterward be of these things, yet there follows nothing that implys any Contradiction, either with relation to God or the things themselves. For supposing the Ill foreseen do happen as it was foreseen, then was God's Foresight of it true, and the Desire of God that it might not happen is a Proof of his Divine Goodness, which cannot but have the highest Aversion for Evil; that is, a mighty Desire that there should not happen any Evil; were it not so, God might be suspected of Malignity. It is likewise a Proof of his Justice; for there is nothing so becoming God, or so just with respect to him, as to desire he might not be offended, or that Men should not deviate from his Will by Sin and Misery. But it will be said, this Desire of his would thus be charged with Weakness, the Thing not coming to pass as was wish'd. I think I have already sufficiently answer'd this Objection, and shewn, that God did not desire this, as we do natural and brute Matters. It was not God's Pleasure to will that the falling out of things, or their not falling out should be by constraint. He did not desire Man's Liberty should be destroy'd, nor that Man should not be able to determine himself whither he had a mind to determine himself. This is not the Object of God's Desire or his Power. God's Desire is the Good-will he has toward Man to make him freely happy, to which Good-will he adds Means and the Effects of his Power, which he offers Man that he may freely

VI. *This Desire is conformable to the Goodness, Justice, and indeed to the Power of God, tho' the Ill foreseen does happen.*

Chap. IV.  embrace 'em. If he does not do it, and so falls into Mischief, the Foresight, Goodness and Power of God (who would not violate Man's Liberty) are perfectly untouch'd and not at all impeachable.

VII. *If the Ill foreseen one determinate way, should fall out some other way, the Divine Foresight would not therefore be less worthy of God.*

VII. But if the Ill foreseen comes to pass some other Way than that wherein it was determinately foreseen that it would come to pass, for Example, if, God having foreseen that the Sinner would give himself up to some one Vice, it should so fall out (give me leave to speak thus) that by the use of his Liberty he should yield to some other Vice inconsistent with the former, (and this, absolutely speaking, he may do) yet would not the Divine Foresight be therefore less true or less becoming God: because the Divine Prevision does not foresee these things as absolutely determin'd and necessary; but as things that may, absolutely speaking, be chang'd if Man will. For God sees and foresees above all things that Man is, and ever will be at all times free, and that, absolutely speaking, he may determine himself indifferently to any particular Way, amongst a thousand possible ones, which he shall best like: and tho' he foresees that Man's Habits, the Temptations of the Devil, and the Impressions of Nature incline him such or such a Way, and that therefore it is morally certain that such or such a thing will happen; yet, he foresees likewise that his Liberty, if it will use its Right and Power, is stronger than all this; that the Tempter is free to vary his Temptations, and that Man may withdraw himself from some certain Objects of Nature and give himself up to others. And so, tho' some other thing should happen than what God foresaw as morally certain and determin'd, yet would there nothing fall out contrary to the Nature of the Divine Prevision which does not absolutely exclude all other possible Ways of Events. The Nature of the Truth of these kinds of Pervisions and Predictions is compatible with the Possibility of their being otherwise accomplish'd; so that tho' they should come to pass otherwise, it would be no way inconsistent with the Nature of the Truth of 'em: and so they are always true after their Manner, which is free and not absolutely determinate.

VIII. But

VIII. But should the Evil foreseen not come to pass at all, then would God and the Angels of Heaven receive thence a mighty accessory Joy : and so far in this Case would the Prevision of God be from becoming unworthy of him, deficient, fallible and imperfect ; that on the contrary, it would then have its true Aim and most proper and real Accomplishment. Here I believe Men will be apt to fancy I have a mind to be Extravagant in advancing such strange Contradictions and Paradoxes that one knows not what to think of 'em. No, no, 'tis no such Matter. I speak Truths well grounded, excellent, and I thank God, clear and sound ones too. I have said (a) somewhere that God knew Sin, first, because it is his Will it should not happen. And so, when God foresaw determinately, and with as great Certainty as moral things are capable of, Sins and consequent Miseries, and these Evils do not come to pass, then does his Foresight enjoy its true Aim and Desire, and is then most perfectly accomplish'd. I will explain this clearly, if possible : for if this be once well understood, it will give us great In-sight into the Knowledge of God's Conduct towards Men, of his Predictions, of his Goodness, of his Sincerity, and of the Truth of his Promises, and of his Protestations that he wills not the Death of a Sinner, even after he has foretold it, and denounc'd it in the most absolute Manner imaginable.

IX. When God, who might have rested eternally happy and satisfy'd with the Sight of himself alone, was pleas'd to issue out of himself, and cast his Eye upon some thing else, it was to behold out of himself the Portraits of himself, and the Emanations of his Power, his Goodness, his Beauty and Happiness, as has been already demonstrated. The direct and true Term of God's Sight, and of the Will which he had to look out of his own Essence, is Good. For it cannot be Nothing ; seeing God by this his Will makes things to be : for the same Reason it cannot be Sin which yet was not ; and when he sees Sin, he does it only by seeing that the (b) Goodness he design'd such a Subject is not receiv'd by it ; so that the very Sight of Ill supposes the Will to do good. It is the same thing proportion

VIII. If the Evil foreseen by God does not come to pass, then does God's Prevision attain its most perfect Aim.

(a) Oec. of Sin, Chap. V. § 2.

IX. The Object of the Sight and Foresight of God is what is good. God would not foresee at all the Particulars of Evil, if he did not design to take it away and bring

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Good in its room.

(b) See Oecon. of Sin, Chap. IV. § 6.

Chap. IV. ably in the Foresight of Evil, especially in the exact and particular Foresight of such or such Evils either of Punishment or of Sin. If God when he has discover'd some Evil in a thing, did not will the ceasing and discontinuance of it, he would let it alone without thinking any more of it, without applying himself to any further particular Consideration of it, to see or foresee it, or any of its Branches, Fruits or Consequences, or determinately to foretell 'em. No, he would then renounce all these hateful Sights, and would forsake the Direction of such a Subject and leave it to it self as he does the Devils with regard to themselves. For what Delight or Pleasure could God take to see how many Ways he might be hated, blasphem'd, curs'd, to see that done which infinitely displeases him? when his Divine Majesty has had a full Sight of Evil by considering that his Creature rejects the Good he does it (for this is in God the Sight of Evil) and when he foresees in general and indeterminately the obstinate and invincible Continuance of the Evil, by considering and seeing that the intelligent Creature does knowingly, wilfully, and deliberately resolve to reject all the good things and the Means to 'em which his Divine Goodness and Power presents it with, then God leaves this Subject to it self, without concerning himself any more in particularly foreseeing all the Wickednesses and Evils to which it may from thence forward abandon it self; excepting always, when this Creature shall happen to live among the Good, and may endeavour to pervert 'em. For then God will continually watch over all it does wherein the Good may be any wise concern'd. But we are not yet come so far, and what we have been saying respects the Wicked alone abandon'd to his Sins and Miseries.

X. When God applies himself to foresee Evils, it is a sign he intends to take 'em away and to cure 'em. A Similitude.

X. But when God applies himself particularly to see and to foresee the Evils of a Subject, and when this Foresight is principally terminated upon this Subject, it is an infallible Sign God wills not the Foresight of 'em but merely that they may not come to pass. For God has not the foolish Curiosity so usual among Men, to will the Sight and Foresight of Evils merely to have the Ideas of 'em, as if this was a Matter of any great Importance to the Perfection of his Divine Knowledge, which

which may very easily be without all Ideas of Crea- Chap. IV.
tures. and that cannot be terminated upon the Ideas of Evil but only for Good, were it not for this End. Evil is so abominable to him that he would wholly leave it. It is with God in this Case as with a wise and charitable Physician : when he comes to inform himself of the Case of his Patient, he considers and looks narrowly into the Causes and Symptoms of the Distemper ; and when upon the best Enquiry he foresees and foretells all the natural Consequences and Issues of it, it is a certain Sign that he intends to remove and cure these Evils, and to hinder by all possible Methods their dismal Effects. If he gains his End, and these dreaded Evils come not to pass ; so far are his Pains and Skill and Prognosticks from being needless, vain and defective, because things do not fall out as he foretold they might, that on the contrary, 'tis this that perfects 'em, as I may say, and renders 'em exact and accomplish'd. For when a thing attains its End, it attains its Completion and Perfection ; and consequently the Search and Fore-knowledge of a future Evil which flows from a Principle that desires the Evil may not happen ; this Fore knowledge does then attain its End, that is to say, its Completion and Perfection, when the Evil does not come to pass.

Let us apply all this to God without changing the Terms in the least, and let us thence conclude with an Evidence that nothing but affected Ignorance or fond Perverseness can darken, that, when God foresees and even foretells most determinately and particularly any future Evils. he does not only desire they may never fall out, and does also all he possibly can that they may not ; but that, when they do not fall out, it is his Joy, and the Delight of his Saints, and the greatest Perfection of his Divine Fore-knowledge, which by that Means is most perfectly accomplish'd. And it is so indeed with respect to the Event of Evil ; but then it is in such a way as is less pleasing to God, and as it were forc'd and against the Grain : which yet he does not absolutely hinder, because he will not force the Liberty of intelligent Creatures ; whose future Evils he foresees as morally, but not absolutely certain and necessary,

XI. *The Usefulness of these Principles. The Proof of 'em from Scripture: and first, that all the Methods and Dealings of God are purposely us'd by him to hinder the Event of the Evils he foresees and foretells.*

XI. I can recommend these Truths as certain, excellent and useful with some sort of Confidence; because, I thank God, I see 'em perfectly and clearly in their very Sources; and if I may venture to say so, I see wonderful Consequences springing and following from 'em to dissipate the many and great Difficulties and Clouds that have hitherto hinder'd our Sight of the Wisdom and Goodness, and Mercy, of the Sincerity, Justice and Veracity of God in his wonderful Dealings with the Sons of Men. I call the Holy Scriptures to warrant and witness these Truths, which are (as a thousand other Means) made use of by God, on purpose to hinder the happening of those Evils which God did foresee, nay even of such which were by him foreseen as determinately and certainly as possibly could be in Moral things. When the Scripture represents God as foreseeing, and foretelling too, the Sins and Miseries of the World in general, or of some Nation or Persons in particular, as when he foresaw and indeed foretold to *Noah*, to *David*, and by him, and by *Isaiah*, by *St. Paul* and by *St. John*, that the Heart of Man would always be a Source of Evils; that God looking upon the Earth, especially towards the last Days, should not find in it so much as one that did Good; that the whole Earth would be plunged into the Darkness of Death; that all would by an universal Apostacy forsake God; that Men would run after Lies and Delusions; and that all People would follow the Beast: or when he foresaw, and likewise foretold by *Moses*, by *David*, by *Isaiah*, by *Jeremy*, by *Ezekiel*, and even by *Jesus Christ*, that the Jewish Nation would rebel against God, that it would not know and receive, but Evil-treat the Messiah; that in the Days of *Zedechias* the People should go into Captivity, *Jerusalem* be burnt, and that unhappy Prince be led in Chains, and have his Eyes put out in *Babylon*; in fine, when God foresaw *Cain's* Murder of *Abel*, and an infinite Number of other Events that respect particular Persons; in all these and the like Cases, he took Cognizance of these Evils and foresaw and foretold 'em only to hinder their coming to pass, and with a deep and hearty Desire that they might never happen. The great and natural Aversion God has to Sin, his own Words and those various Methods;

thods he makes use of to destroy it and its Effects, Chap. IV. ought fully to convince us of this Truth. He advertises, for Example, Men, Jews, Christians, and particular Persons, a thousand Ways to withdraw 'em from the Evils he has foreseen. He shews 'em what is Good; he commands the doing of it; he promises 'em mighty Rewards for so doing; he draws and allures 'em to it: he forbids what is Evil; threatens to punish 'em for it; he exhorts, protests and swears he would not have these Evils befall 'em; he comes and speaks, and prays, and groans and weeps for the Evil he foresees coming upon 'em to evidence how greatly he abhors the Event of it; he even dies to destroy Evil, he sends his Embassadors and Friends to perpetuate all these things, he gives good Inspirations toward Good, and Fears, and Abhorrence of Evil and Remorse after it; in a Word, what does he not do! And then where would be the Sincerity, the Truth and Goodness worthy a God, if after all it were not true that he really does not will the Event of the Evil he foresees, and that he does not therefore only foresee and foretell it that he might hinder its happening?

XII. Have you a mind to hear God protesting thus himself? *Jesus Christ*, in St. Matthew, foreseeing and foretelling that many false Prophets should come and should deceive many, does at the same time exhort Men to beware of 'em, and consequently, to hinder the happening of what he foresaw and foretold; and adds for a Reason of their preventing it, (a) *Lo, I have foretold you of it: as if he should have said; the Reason why I foretell you these things is purposely to hinder their befalling you, or any others that shall read or hear these Words of mine, which yet are those very Persons Jesus Christ foresaw would be deceiv'd.*

XII. *Proofs of the same Truth from express Words and Examples of Scripture.*

(a) Matt. 24: 24, 25.

When in *Ezekiel*, he foresees and foretells concerning a Sinner, that *he shall surely die*, or die the Death, yet he does not desire this sad Event, but rather that it should not happen but the contrary; and this is what he even swears on his Life. (b) *As I live, saith the Lord, I will not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he turn from his Wickedness and live. When I shall have said to a Sinner, thou shalt die the Death, if he turn from his*

Example the second.

(b) Ezek. 33: 11, 14.

Chap. IV. *his Wickedness he shall certainly live, he shall not die*
 (a) Ezek. 18. 23. *(a) Why should I in any wise take Pleasure in his Death and not in his Conversion and Life? He lets us see that his Fore knowledge and Prediction had no other Aim but to prevent the Evil coming upon him; for after he had foreknown and foretold it, he adds, (b) turn ye therefore O House of Israel, and you shall live; and why will you die? Should we not rather believe God even when he protests and swears, than credit the weak Understanding of Men, who presume to maintain the contrary. under pretence that they cannot tell how to make these Truths agree with the false Notions they have fram'd to themselves of Fatality, and of Nature, of the Properties and Perfections of the Divine Prescience?*

A third Example.

Here is another Unanswerable. God did undoubtedly foresee as determinately as possible the Destruction of Jerusalem by Nebucadnezzar, and the hard and grievous Captivity of Zedechias: God's Words in this Case are the most absolute imaginable. (c) *Thus saith the Lord, the God of Israel, thus shall you say to the King of Judah, that hath sent you to enquire of me.---The Chaldeans shall return and shall War against this City and shall burn it with Fire. Thus saith the Lord, be not deceiv'd, saying, the Chaldeans will surely depart from us, for they shall not go away. And tho' you should smite the whole Army of the Chaldeans that War against you, and there were none left but wounded Men, yet should they rise every Man in his Tent and burn this City with Fire. And upon the King's more particular Enquiry of the Prophet concerning this Matter, (d) Is there any Word from the Lord? the Prophet answers him; there is: thou shalt be deliver'd into the Hands of the King of Babylon, which is in other Places deliver'd with more Circumstances. There can be nothing more express than this, nor, it should seem, more absolute. Nevertheless, see what God says in general concerning all these things. (e) Go tell the People all the Words I have said unto thee and commanded thee,---May be they will hear them and return every one from the Evil of their Way; and I will repent of the Evil which I thought to do unto 'em for their wicked Actions. And see more particularly what God saith in the Case which I have shewn was so certainly foretold and foreseen.*

seen. (a) *The Prophet says to King Zedechias, Thus saith the Lord, the God of Hosts, the God of Israel: If thou wilt go forth willingly and surrender thy self to the Princes and Officers of the King of Babylon, thy Soul shall live, and this City shall not be burnt with Fire, and thou shalt live, thou, and thy Household.* And when the King seem'd to doubt the Truth of this, the Prophet assures him, that his Predictions, his Counsel, and his Desire which were not his own but God's, had no other Design but to hinder these Evils from coming to pass, and to prevent 'em: he does from God, or rather God does by his Prophet, beseech the King to second the Goodwill the Divine Goodness had for him, which was to put a stop to the ensuing Calamities: (b) *I pray thee hearken unto the Voice of the Lord in that I say unto thee, that it may be well with thee and thy Soul may live.*

Chap. IV.
(a) Jer.
38. 17.

(b) Ibid.
v. 20.

Whoever comprehends the Agreement and System of this particular Case, or of any other, will easily understand all the rest: and the Difficulty, that if such and such things foreseen should not come to pass, then would God's Designs, and consequently his gracious and chief Purposes and Works that are annex to them not take Effect, would vanish. The Good would always come to pass, tho' without the Ill. and by other Ways: since God in his Power and Wisdom has infinite Ways of compassing one and the same End.

If you say, that in these and the like Examples we have an Account only of *Promises* and *Threatnings*, and not of *Provisions* and *Predictions*, and that the one must not be confounded with the other, this would be the childishest Cavil imaginable: for *Threatnings* and *Promises*, especially with relation to God, are nothing but *Provisions* and *Predictions*, or *Declarations* of things profitable or hurtful to Men. *Provision* or *Prediction* is the Genus, *Promises* and *Threatnings* are two of its Species.

Now as all that is really true of the Genus is so likewise of the Species, what Incongruity is it to alledge the Species thereby to shew what is in the Genus, which contains no more than all the Species. Moreover, I do maintain it is impossible to meet with any *Provisions* or *Predictions* more formal and express than those are in this Case of the Prophet *Jeremy*; and nothing

Chap. IV. thing but a mere Desire to oppose the Light of Truth
 can make any one dispute it.

Example
 the Fourth.

After this last Example out of *Jeremy* I might well be excus'd from adducing any more, seeing this may serve for a Model for all Cases that relate to the foreknowledge and fore-telling of Evil. Yet I will give some others, and first, the Prediction of *Jonas*, with the Gloss of the Gentlemen of the Port-Royal upon it; and I do it the rather, because they do but give us St. *Chrysostome's* Sense of the Words. It is on the third Chapter and fourth Verse of *Jonas*. *Jonas cry'd and said, Tet forty days and Niniveh shall be destroy'd. Why, O holy Prophet, (says Chrysostome) dost thou foretell evils that shall never happen? For this very reason it is,* answers the Holy Man, *that I foretell them, that they may not happen.*

(a) Mic.
 2. 11.

The same Persons having thus translated a Passage in *Micah* according to the vulgar Translation (a), *Would to God I had not the Spirit of the Lord, and that what I say were rather lies!* They thus comment upon it, *Tho' the Prophet honour'd the Gift of Prophecy as became him, which he had received from the Holy Spirit; yet his great Charity, when he saw the dire Calamities that were falling upon Israel, made him say, that were it in his Power, he could rather wish his Prophecies were false, than to see them accomplish'd by the utter ruine of his People.* If the Prophet had so great Charity, (and if that came from God, as certainly it did, who to be sure has it himself in a much higher degree) much more shall the infinite Charity of God make him desire his Previsions and Predictions might be, I do not say vain and frustrated, but not fulfilled by the happening of Evil; that so they may not be in vain, but may attain their most perfect Accomplishment, and the highest Perfection they are capable of, which is to prevent the Evil they foretell as conditionally certain.

The Fifth
 Example.

Yet one more Example. None, that in the least understand the Prophecies, make any doubt but the Prophecy of *Zephaniab* is a Prevision and Prediction of the great, universal, and final Destruction of the Wicked through the whole Earth by the universal Plagues and Judgments of God, of which *Isaiab*, the 24th of St. *Matthew*, and the *Revelations* are so full. Now at the very same time that God foretells and gives many particular

particular Circumstances of these Events, he also inter- Chap. IV.
mixes Warnings to these wicked and abominable Men, by which he testifies his Desire that by their Conversion they would hinder the coming to pass of these Evils (b). *Gather your selves together, yea gather together, O Nation not desirable, before the Decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff; before the fierce anger of the Lord come upon you; before the day of the Lord's anger come upon you.* This is so clear that I shall say no more upon it.

XIII. But I see I am insensibly fallen upon the Pre- vision and even Prediction of Evils that concern Man only after the Offer of Grace, whereas the Method of my Subject has yet brought me only to the foreseeing of the Evils that were coming upon Man after his Fall, before any Consideration of God's offering him his Grace. This is indeed true. Yet, as the nature of Predictions, and of all sorts of Previsions of Evil, is in substance the very same that God had before all Consideration of his making Man any Offers of Grace, and may be illustrated and clear'd by such as suppose the Offer of Grace, I thought I might take the Liberty to prefer the Usefulness of this Illustration to a too rigid and exact observance of Method, which I now am going to pursue again.

XIV. Suppose we therefore Man in the State of the Fall, and before God's Offer of Grace; and that in this State God foresees in general, *First*, That Man, supposing him to have no other Principles or Objects but what he then has, will necessarily and infallibly fall into infinite Mischiefs, and that by a natural, or more than natural, and absolutely certain Necessity. *Secondly*, And then that God is pleased to enter into a more particular Search and Foresight of these Evils, by foreseeing that Man will give himself up to such and such particular Vices and Actions, and will draw down upon himself such particular Evils and Miseries (a particular Determination this, only of moral necessity and certainty). *Thirdly*, That God desires this his Foresight may not take Effect, nor be ratified by the Event. And thus far it was that we were come.

*XV. How
God fore-
saw Good
as possible
and future
in Man af-
ter his Fall.*

XV. Go we on now and consider, that as God has seen and foreseen that Man after his Fall being left to himself. would do nothing but commit Evil and suffer for it (having in him and before him nothing but ill Principles and ill Objects;) and that withall having foreseen that he being still Free, might set a-Work and determine sometimes one Evil Principle and sometimes another, now be led by one ill Passion or Object and then by another at his own Choice; hence one may see how easie it was for God to foresee, that if he was pleas'd to give again to Man good Principles, and to offer him a new, good Objects, that then Man, who was still Free, and was not fallen out of pure Malice, and with Knowledge and full Resolution to continue in Wickedness, might recover out of it, and freely cleave to the good Principles and follow such good Objects as well inward as outward, that God should present unto him.

*XVI.
God fore-
seeing
Good possi-
ble, will
endeavour
to bring to
pass this
his Fore-
sight, and
to hinder*

XVI. This new Foresight of Good in fallen Man being opposite to the Event of unmixt and eternal Evils which God foresaw before, and which it pleas'd him therefore to foresee that he might prevent 'em, God will heartily join Issue here, and will labour to further and facilitate the Event of Good, that is to say, he will give Man outward and inward Graces, to make all the Good he sees may possibly happen to Man actually do so.

his Foresight of Evil from being accomplish'd.

*XVII. Af-
ter Man's
Fall and
the Offer of
Grace, God
foresees the
Salvation
and Dam-
nation of
every Man
only possi-
ble, without
foreseeing
or decre-
ing deter-
minately*

XVII. Thus the Foresight of Evil, which aim'd at its not coming to pass, is much lessen'd according to God's Desire: yet is not the Event of it absolutely hinder'd, nor the Object of his gracious Prescience altogether certain.

If Man at the very first could be put or really were in a State wherein there were in him or without him only good Principles and good Objects, good Motives and good Habits, and those strongly fortified, then without doubt the Prevision of Good in general would be of absolute Certainty as to its Event, and the Foresight of Evil would attain its Perfection, which was that Evil might not happen. But the Evil in and out either of 'em.

out of Man being to cease only by his Consent and Chap. IV
Co-operation, till this Co-operation of his be perfect-
ed, and his Liberty be habitually, absolutely and fully
resign'd to God, so long does the Evil subsist in him
and out of him; and the Good which God also gives
him subsists likewise in him and out of him. And thus
has Man a good and an evil Principle, good and evil
Objects, and being free may chuse which of the two
he pleases: God will assist him, to draw him to Good;
and the Devil in Conjunction with his own Corrup-
tion and with that of corrupt Nature will assist him to
draw him to Evil; and as to himself he may give up
himself to which he pleases, to Good or Evil, to Life
or Death, without God's foreseeing determinately or
much less decreeing that he shall give himself up to
one side and not to the other. God, in this State,
foresees Man's Salvation simply as possible, and his
Damnation only as possible and no more. We suppose
Man as yet not to have contracted any wicked Habits
of voluntarily rejecting the new Graces of God.

XVIII. This is the *Object* of the *Divine Providence* XVIII.
after Sin, and since God's good Pleasure to raise the *The true*
Sinner out of it and to save him. This Object about *Object of*
which for the future the Divine Providence will con- *Provi-*
cern it self, is, A Man to whom God foresees there *dence af-*
may infinite Evils happen thro' his own Fault if he *ter the Fall*
turn to them and continue in 'em, and infinite Goods *of Man:*
thro' the Divine Grace if by his Liberty he embrace it *and God's*
and correspond with it, which Liberty of his God will *Will to*
endeavour to assist all sorts of Ways, by his continual *shew him*
Cares and Researches, by more special Foresights, and *Mercy.*
by the Effects of all kinds of Methods, as we have seen *(a) In the*
at large elsewhere (a); and I intend to touch upon *Vols. of*
some of 'em again, or rather to remark some new and *the Resto-*
weighty Truths relating to them. *ration*
and Co-
operation

C H A P. V.

How God has given Man and the World to Jesus Christ to Restore 'em, and how Jesus Christ does by his Divine Providence watch over 'em. Some Examples that may serve for all Cases. Adam and his Posterity, and first Cain. How Providence furnish'd them with all necessary Means to keep 'em from Evil and to make 'em Happy.

I. *A Truth I.*

to be observed in the following Discourse. God

does not re-

new nor in-

crease his

Graces but

upon corre-

sponding

with what

he first

gives.

(a) Oec. of

Sin, Ch. 2.

§ 8. and

Oec. be-

fore the

Incarn. Chap. 5. § 6, 7.



E must here call to mind a Truth formerly (a) propos'd, viz. that when God had made an intelligent Creature to whom he gave his Light and his Love and all his preventing Graces he resolv'd, to make it his inviolable Rule

and Decree not to encrease them, or not to give any new ones to it, but upon, and in proportion to, its corresponding with him by its Liberty, Desire and sincere Love.

Upon this it came to pass that the Devil being fallen, besides other Reasons God had, not to offer him Grace any more, this is one, because the Devils cannot present to God an Act of Love and Desire towards him, upon which God might yet shew them new Favour, which he has resolv'd not to do but by way of Reward to our Correspondence with what he first gave.

Incarn. Chap. 5. § 6, 7.

II. *This*

Truth

holds good

after as

well as be-

fore the

Fall.

II. 'Tis true indeed, God's preventing Graces do not require antecedently in the Creature an Act of Compliance with something that went before; this being a Contradiction. It is true likewise, that what Graces God should bestow upon a Creature after its Fall, may be consider'd as preventing Graces. Yet if we look more exactly into 'em they are not so in themselves; they being given in Consequence of the first Graces of Creation, and are a renewing or increasing of them.

So

So that they do antecedently require Acts of Correspondence, without which God could not bestow them, by reason of this Will of his, by which, after he had made his Creature in a State of Grace and Favour, he resolv'd not to renew or encrease his Graces but according as his Creature should by its Desires and Love correspond with them. God did at first do and give all things to his Creature out of his pure Love which he bore to it in a preventing Manner. But he will not encrease or renew his Gifts to it but upon Condition, and upon the Occasion of the Love and Desire which his Creature shall freely bear to him by way of Correspondence. Chap. V.

A Truth this of exceeding great use. For hence is the Necessity of a Mediator evident, as was observ'd elsewhere (a), that there must be One to supply and satisfy Man's defect of Correspondence, and to derive upon the Sinner by his Desire and Love, such new Graces and Gifts as God would not continue, nor encrease or renew but on his Creatures corresponding. From this remarkable Principle it appears likewise, how, after the Graces which God has again presented to his Creature in Correspondence with the Desires and Love of the Mediator, he will neither augment 'em, nor give any new ones, nor lessen the Pains which the Sinner must undergo, but according as, after his Admission to Favour, he shall himself correspond with God by his Liberty, by his Desires and by his Love; or as others shall in his behalf offer up to God Acts of Love and Correspondence. But we must not here descend to Particulars, tho' we might there discover great Light to explain the Justice of God's Dealings with Men in divers Instances. (a) Oec. before the Incarn. Ch. 5. § 6.

III. God seeing the Devil being fallen was incapable of the Renovation of his Grace; as well thro' the pure Malice and Spirituality of his Sin, as because there could not from him flow any Act of Correspondence to draw down the Divine Grace; was pleas'd to provide that Man (whom now he resolv'd to create) might not fall into the same Misery. For God plainly fore saw that Man, were he made in the same State as the Angels III. How God by his Providence hath provided that if Man should chance to fall, there should be

G 2

one to exert in his stead Acts of Correspondence, to obtain the renewing and increase of Grace.

Chap. V. Angels were, might irrecoverably sin as well as they. He therefore foreseeing this Fall of Man possible and irremediable, intended, according to the Na-

(a) See nature and Aim of his Divine Prescience of Evil (a), to
 above Chap. do all he possibly could to hinder its coming to pass :
 3. § 5, 9, for which Reason, he not only made Man of a Nature
 10.

(b) Col. self the first Son of Man, (b) *The First born of every Crea-*
 1. 15. *ture*, and make him as it were his Throne, his Conduit
 and Organ. by it to communicate with Man, and so to
 lay the Matter, that if Man chanced to fall into Sin,
 and so ceasing to correspond to God's first Mercies and
 being incapable himself ever to do it, to which Acts
 of Correspondence alone God decreed the Continu-
 ance, the Encrease and Renovation of his Graces,
 should always have regard, intending, I say, upon this
 Failure, that this Son of Man, this Elder Brother of all
 other Men. in short, that this **JESUS CHRIST**
 (c) See the born of *Adam* a little after his Creation (c) should offer
 Oecon. of to God his Love, his Desires, his Liberty and his
 Sin, Chap. Heart in favour of Man, and so make up his past neg-
 11. § 15, lect of Correspondence, and by the infinite Merit of
 16, &c. his Acts and of his Divine Mediation bring down the
 Grace of God upon Man. I have prov'd, and at large
 explain'd this great Truth in the Treatise of the *Resto-*
ration of Man.

IV. Before IV. Hence we see how, before Man was created,
 the Foun- or this World we live in was made, God's good Pro-
 dation of vidence watch'd over Man and that God design'd to
 the World unite Men to himself and make 'em happy in and thro'
 God chose *Jesus Christ*, either by always conversing with them by
 Men to e- him (who is the very same God that created Man) and
 ternal Sal- thro' him communicating to 'em all his Graces ; or,
 vation in in Case they should fall, by making them fresh Offers
 and thro' of his Graces answering the Merits and Love which
Jesus Christ *Jesus Christ* would present to the Divinity in their be-
 half : after which, God finding them restor'd by *Jesus*
Christ, and also fill'd with his Graces by their own
 Correspondence, might chuse 'em in his Son to unite
 'em eternally and happily to himself.

V. Now this last Case, *viz.* that of his Fall hap-
pen'd. Man sin'd and reduc'd himself to that Incapa-
city which we have already seen. And *Jesus Christ*
foreseeing in the Divine Wisdom, to which he was per-
sonally united, that Man not having sin'd thro' so pure
and refin'd a Malice as the Devil had, might be
reclaim'd, supposing God's Graces were given him a-
new; which he demanded of his Father for Man with
so infinite a Love and so pressing Instances, that he
obtain'd of his Father all those Graces we have al-
ready mention'd, with the Conditions also annex'd to
them.

V. *Jesus Christ answer'd God's Expectation and so obtain'd Grace for Man.*

VI. Ever since the Son of God interpos'd as Media-
tor between God his Father and Men his Brethren,
(not to say from his first Birth) God has given him the
World and Men to bring them back again to him (a)
to redeem and save, to govern and conduct them: So
that since the Fall *JESUS CHRIST GOD-MAN*
is he that presides over the Divine-Providence, and
that is to supply all Necessaries both to Men and all
the Creatures, in order to render 'em happy and glori-
ous as they were before the Fall. He is the true God
that must provide for, govern, conduct and save us; the
Redeemer of the World, *that upholds all Nature and all*
Things by his powerful Word says St. Paul (b). His De-
sign is this, to furnish us with Ways and Means to ex-
tirpate the Evil and to do it effectually, and to set the
Good in its room; and so at length to present to his
Father his Creatures restor'd, that his Father may by
him communicate to 'em his Happiness and his Glory.

VI. *Jesus Christ God-Man ever since the Fall of Adam presides over the Government of the World. His great Design.*

VII. For the attaining this End let us see how this
Divine Saviour has begun the Work of Providence,
whereof he is the Steward and Dispenser. But first, let
it be observ'd, that we must hence-forward no more
consider Providence, Predictions and Prophecies with
relation only to the pure Divinity, but with regard to
God in *Jesus Christ*, or simply with regard to *Jesus*
Christ. This must be also noted in most of the things
that are said of God, of the Lord, of the Lord of Hosts,
in the Old Testament; all these things, excepting a
very few Passages directly refer to *Jesus Christ*, and
must be understood of him: and by this means
we shall save abundance of figurative Senses that are

(a) Psal. 2. 8.
Isa. 49. 5.
Heb. 1. 2.
(b) Heb. 1. 3.

VII. *Providence, and all that the Scripture says of God by way of Anthropathy, ought to be explain'd properly with respect to Jesus Christ.*

Chap. V. usually without any Necessity, put upon such places of Scripture as ascribe to God corporeal or humane Affections, which are for the most part true in the utmost strictness in the Letter, as are the several Apparitions; and when it is said, the *Israelites* grieved or troubled God, that God repented he had made Man, or of his Design to punish such a Person or Nation which he after pardon'd. This is all literally true. For it was *Jesus Christ*, true God and true Man, who did all this, and who as God and as Man was susceptible of both divine and humane Properties.

VIII.

Three Evils of Man. Three Remedies apply'd by the Providence of Jesus Christ. He takes the Angels as Associates in the Ministry of Providence for a time.

VIII. This Adorable and Blessed Saviour, perceiving in fallen Man these three principal Obstacles, viz. 1. The Corruption of the Heart of Man now become Ignorant and Wicked; 2. the Devil united to him and to corrupt Nature; 3. the corporeal Corruption and Disorder of Nature and of all the World; oppos'd to them these three Antidotes, viz. 1. His good Spirit, 2. the good Angels, 3. the Blessing he bestow'd upon Nature: Each of these three good Things is set against its respective evil one; but as the three Evils are complicated and act mutually upon each other, so it is also with the good ones.

To the Corruption of Man's Heart the good Spirit of God is directly oppos'd, which, by as many Rays and good Motions as are necessary to give us Power to correspond with 'em, enlightens and strikes the Heart of every Man that comes into the World, as has been largely explain'd elsewhere. To the Devil and his Temptations are oppos'd the Holy Angels, which God sends forth to inspire good Thoughts and holy Imaginations into Men by the same Ways the Devil endeavours to inspire ill ones, and so they make head against the evil Spirit, provided Man will hearken to and follow the good Motions they inspire him with. And to the Corruption of Nature is oppos'd the Blessing of Nature which the Son of God sheds and preserves in it and in the whole Universe by the Light, Order and Fecundity which he still maintains therein.

But as the Son of God was not pleas'd yet entirely to take away all the Corruption of the Universe; which Corruption is the Element wherein the Devil takes his Pastime; and which Man, full of inward

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Corruption may yet increase and spread over the Material World, which would eclipse the Divine Blessing, and immediately give the Devil again a full Right over the Visible World; *Jesus Christ* to prevent this Ruine which he foresaw, has taken to himself the Angels as Associates in his Government of the World.

IX. He has therefore subjected this World to Angels; but only for so long time as its Corruption remains: for (a) *the World to come*, (when *Jesus Christ* shall come to reign in it in Glory after the Destruction of the Wicked,) *shall not be subjected to Angels*, says St. Paul. But 'tis quite otherwise as to this. It was very congruous that the charitable Providence of *Jesus Christ* should oppose the Disorders which the evil Angels would be still raising in Nature, opposite Spirits to keep up good Order in it, to regulate and govern it, and also to assist the Ignorance of Man, who without their help would throw himself headlong into a thousand Dangers, and would take wrong and pernicious Courses, thinking he did no harm, or it may be thinking he did well: This God obviates and presents by Means of his good Angels, to whom he has put this World in Subjection.

In Effect, we need but open the Bible, to see every where there how God has set his Angels, some over the Stars, others over the Elements, others over the Fire, the Air, the Waters, the Earth, over Plants, over certain Countries, Nations and Persons. The Apocalypse, nay the whole Scripture convinces us that God administers all by the Mediation of Angels, Nature, the Law, and Grace it self, or at least many Means of Grace. I believe none will question this Truth, and so I will not set about a more particular Proof of it by citing a heap of Scriptures to that purpose.

X. Only it must be noted that the good Angels do not offer Violence to Nature, nor govern or dispose of things out of Humour and Caprice. They preserve in it the Blessing of God; and knowing the hidden Springs of things, they do so combine 'em as to produce astonishing Effects beyond the Power of Man to imitate. So that the Course of Nature, tho' subject to Angels, yet it is still carried on by natural Ways.

Chap. V.

IX. *Jesus Christ governs the World by the Mediation of Angels.*

(a) Heb. 2. 5.

X. *The Angels govern the World by ways agreeable to Nature, which may also in part be foreseen.*

Chap. V. and we might foresee some of those Ways did we but exactly understand their Principles. From this must be excepted Cases extraordinary and miraculous, which happen whenever the Goodness of God is pleas'd to shew it self in favour of some of his singular Friends, or when his Justice is pleas'd to manifest it self upon some notorious Sinners, &c.

XI. Providence has equally furnish'd all Men in Adam with these Advantages. XI. The Providence of Christ has provided all Men equally with those Advantages in *Adam*. It gave 'em to *Adam* that from him they might equally descend upon all his Posterity without Exception. So that had it been possible that all the Men that are born of *Adam*, and that ever shall be, could then have actually sprung from him, they had all been equally advantag'd with these Blessings.

XII. God has neither determin'd nor foreseen the Number of Individuals that were to descend from Adam, much less has he elected some of 'em and reprobated the rest. XII. We must not here be misled by this double Error, viz. that God foresaw, nay and determin'd too, all the Individuals that were to be born of Man, and that out of these pretended Individuals determinately foreseen, God has chosen some and rejected others, resolv'd to secure some and let the rest perish, to save some and damn others. These are two Chimera's that Men have invented either under false or ill understood Pretexts. They have invented the first, as well because they understood not that the Knowledge God has of the Creatures is perfectly free and arbitrary, and by no means necessary to him; as because they knew not the Nature of God's Decree (a), nor of the Fecundity of his Works. And they have imagin'd the second from their Ignorance of the Nature of God, of his Goodness, of his Act, and of the Sense of the Scriptures, and particularly of the Ninth Chapter to the *Romans*.
(a) See Oecon. of Creation, Chap. 5. and 7. n. 20.

XIII. In what Cases God has foreseen, determin'd and foretold the Birth of some particular Persons. XIII. 'Tis true, God has foreseen and determinately foretold the birth of some particular Persons long before they were born, as of *Isaac*, *Jehiah*, and others: But there is a great difference between this and our present Case, wherein we are considering the Root of all Mankind antecedently to all Determination of his, to any Correspondence of his with God, antecedently to any of

of his Works or Habits. But when Men are multi- Chap. V.
ply'd, and some have in a singular Manner obey'd
God; or that God, after their having fallen into an
exceeding Corruption of Manners, is pleas'd to raise
them up again by the Means of some chosen Servants;
in this special Case, God to reward some resolves to
give them such and such Children as it shall best please
him; and to assist others, he determines to bring into
the World at such and such times some holy Instru-
ment, as *Jeshiah* for Example. Here Determination,
Forefight and Prediction, the most particular and cir-
cumstantiate imaginable must be allow'd. For 'tis ve-
ry easie for God to cause, either by his own immediate
Influences, or by his Angels, that good Souls, that
have habitually resign'd themselves to him and fol-
low'd his good Inspirations, shall be placed in such
Circumstances as produce such Effects as he has deter-
min'd. But it is a great Mistake to make general and
universal Rules of these extraordinary and special
Cases.

XIV. Nor must we any more fancy that God, after
his having receiv'd *Adam* into favour again as was
said, was pleas'd to foresee and to determine a-fore-
hand that he should either be sav'd or damn'd, that he
should do this and t'other, that he should have just
such and such a Number of Children, a wicked *Cain*
and a righteous *Abel*, that he should live precisely so
long, no more nor less. I say it with full Assurance
and in the calmest Light. These are all only the Chi-
mera's of Men's sick Brains.

The Truth is, God has foreseen that *Adam* was and al-
ways would be perfectly free; that he might be sav'd or
damn'd at his own Choice; that he had Power either
to accept or reject his Grace; and that having once
accepted it and having got a habit of corresponding to
God, his Salvation was then become more certain than
his Damnation: but once having arriv'd at the Degree
of perfect Resignation of his Liberty to God, then
God foresaw his Salvation wholly certain, as it were,
and elected him in a special Manner as his Spouse, as
a chosen Person that morally speaking could not be
lost; seeing he had no longer any Will of his own;
and that God's Will could not do him any hurt, and
that

XIV. *God*
neither
fore-saw nor
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Salvation
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tion of A-
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or how long
he should
live. What
he did fore-
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this. The
Election of
Adam.

Chap. V. that it was now a Hell to him to be out of the Divine Will. 'Tis true also, that God did foresee that *Adam* was free to beget fewer or more Children as he pleas'd, and that in a State wherein he did more or less fear God, to offer his Children more or less to God, to take more or less Care of them as he pleas'd; and hence in part came that difference which was afterwards observ'd in them.

Lastly, It is true, that the Body of Man being by Sin fallen under the Dominion of the Stars and of the Material World, God knows determinately how long that Combination of Causes that preserve it will last, and when it will break, and so he foresees that naturally the Life of Man cannot exceed such a Term; he sees likewise that Man by his Liberty and ill Living may shorten it more or less; or by his Prayers and Obedience may move God to prolong it.

XV. *That the Term of Life is so set, as to be lengthen'd or shorten'd.* XV. So that it is very true, *first*, that the Life of Man, and indeed of every Man, has certain Bounds which it cannot naturally pass, and that God if he pleases to look on them can certainly foresee them. 2. It is in the *second* Place very true, that Man may shorten this Term by his ill Behaviour. 3. And in the *third* Place, that God may, notwithstanding his determinate Foresight as to the natural Course of things, lengthen it. The Holy Scripture is very express and plain in all the three Cases. As to the first it says, (a) *His Days are determin'd, the number of his Months are before thee: thou hast set his Bounds that he cannot pass.* To the second it says, (b) *Blood thirsty and deceitful Men shall not live out half their Days.* To the third, (c) *Honour thy Father and thy Mother that thy Days may be lengthened in the Land which the Lord thy God giveth thee:* And we have in King *Hezekiah* an Example of this Lengthening (d). Does not our Conscience plainly tell us, maugre all the fine Glosses by which some learned Men do their best to renounce Common Sense, that God would but mock Mankind in thus speaking to them. and sending others to tell them so too, if it were true that their Life and their Death were so precisely, infallibly and immutably fatalized, and that God knew it very well, tho' his Discourse supposes the quite contrary?

XVI. I will make this evident by a familiar Instance. Every one knows there are Clocks or Watches of a different Make, and that as the Springs and Chains are longer or shorter, so they will go fewer or more Hours, some fifteen, twenty or thirty; some a Week, or many Months. Whoever is acquainted with the different Movements of these Machines, knows determinately that being wound up they will go precisely such or such a time and no longer: it is not naturally possible they should go any longer, but it is very possible they may not go so long, and that before the natural Term of their Course be finish'd a thousand Mischances, as Falls or other Accidents may happen that are very common and may stop their Course and make them stand: but if some new Cause come in and that more powerful than the simple natural Force of the Spring, it may wind up the Watch a-new that was naturally going down, and so prolong its Course. Thus it is with the Life of Man. From the Minute of his Formation the Spirit of the Universe, and of the Stars entring into him frames his Machine, his Spring and his Chain, weaker or stronger, longer or shorter; and from his Birth when he does plentifully suck in and incorporate into his Blood by Respiration the same Spirit of the Elements and of the Stars, then is his Machine more or less wound up, and after that, it is naturally impossible it should go beyond the Term then determin'd. But very commonly it does not reach that Term, and almost all Men shorten their Days, some more some less, by their Disorders and ill Lives; whereas on the other hand, God lengthens the Days of some few Persons, there being but few that deserve their Lives should be preserv'd after so miraculous a Manner. This is, by the by, the whole Mystery of the Determination, Shortening, and Prolongation of Life, about which Men have made so much Noise and so many Disputes.

XVII. When *Adam* begat *Cain*, who prov'd a wicked Man and a Murderer of his Brother, this came not so to pass because God had determined, decreed and foreseen infallibly, that *Adam* should beget this wicked Wretch,

XVII. *Cain and his Wickedness were neither determin'd, nor decreed, nor infallibly foreseen of God. How God foresaw the Malignity of Cain, and how it came to pass.*

Chap. V. Wretch, and that God had destin'd him to commit all the ill he did, to Fratricide, and then to Damnation, either by so decreeing it, and of a thing merely possible as it was before, making it infallibly future; or by withdrawing his Assistance and Grace, at least to such a degree as was necessary to enable him to conquer his Temptations; or lastly, by rendering the Event of these things necessary by his infallible Foresight of them. This is all mere Error and Mistake. The Truth is this, That God did foresee that *Adam* might beget good or ill Children according as he dispos'd himself, and as he bred them up, and as the Children when of Age should afterwards determine their Liberty: That God did all he possibly could that the Good he saw as possible might really and actually exist, and the Ill which he saw too as possible might never actually fall out: That *Adam* and his Wife not having sufficiently watch'd over themselves, nor follow'd the Inspirations of God's good Spirit, nor the Suggestions of the good Angels, nor the Blessings and the pure Order of Nature at the time when they begat *Cain*, *Cain* (their Fruit) was (against the Will of God) as it were naturally rooted in a State just as corrupt as was then the State of his Parents; that is to say, in such an one wherein on one hand the good Spirit (objectively present to his Interiour) offer'd to him its Light and good Motions, as did proportionately also the good Angels and the good things of Nature; but wherein on the other hand, the Corruption of his own Heart, in Conjunction with his original and as it were habitual Inclination, did much divert him from this good Principle, and turn'd him towards himself, towards the Suggestions of the Devil, and towards the Corruption of Nature; and this his Disposition being grown strong by a remiss Education, when the Child came to the Age of Understanding and the use of his Liberty, it produced those wicked Fruits contrary to the Will of God.

XVIII.

God deny'd
Cain no-
thing that
might
make him
shun the
Evil and do the Good.

XVIII. And so far was God from destinating *Cain* to his wicked Actions and to his Damnation, or from determining him to them, or necessitating him either by Decree, or by withdrawing or refusing his Grace, or by infallible Foreknowledge; that the quite contrary

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is true, that he design'd him for Vertue and for Life Eternal, that he refus'd him nothing conducive to this End, and that he Endeavour'd by his Divine Power all that could be done without violating his Liberty, that the Evil which he foresaw concerning *Cain* in consequence of his evil Habits, as morally certain and future, might never actually come to pass, as I have already shewn this to be the chief Aim of the Divine Prescience concerning Evil. It was *Cain* alone who of his own pure Choice and free Will made the Event thereof morally and physically certain by the commission and confirmation of his own voluntary Acts, that were contrary to the ardent Desire and Will of his God. It was he alone that resisted the Light, the Desires, the good Motions, the Inspirations (and those extraordinary) of the Holy Spirit, of the good Angels, and of the other Creatures (as what is good in them is the Voice of God) to hearken to and follow the bent of his corrupt Heart, the Desires and Suggestions of the Devil, the Disorders of his Passions and of corporeal Nature; by doing which he unhappily gave Certainty and Existence to the Fruits of his Heart, which was united to the Spirit of the Devil and the Corruption of Nature; which Fruits the Holy Spirit had so earnestly wish'd to prevent and extinguish by his Foresight, by his Graces, and Remonstrances, so graciously saying to him when he saw him in Danger (a), *Why art thou displeased, and why is thy Countenance fallen? if thou doest well shall not thy Oblation be accepted? but if thou wilt not do well sin lies at the door, and it is toward thee that its Inclinations and Desires look* (to get the full Consent of thy Will, and to draw thy Liberty on their side) *but thou shouldest govern and rule over them.* Would not God, the Source of all Goodness, and Truth, and Sincerity, cruelly and deceitfully have mock'd *Cain* in thus speaking to him, if it were true that all was fatally fix'd and necessitated by his Decrees, by his Prescience, by his Determination, and by an Ill Will to deny him the Graces he might have bestowed upon him, and that were necessary for avoiding a Sin which he commanded him to avoid, whilst he refus'd him the only means by which it was possible for him to avoid it? The Fraud of the

(a) Gen.
4. 7.

most

Chap. V. most cruel Hypocrites in the World could scarce arise to such a pitch, even against their mortal Enemies.

XIX. God gave to Cain such Grace as that he might easily have resisted the Evil if he would.

XIX. God was pleas'd not only to assist *Cain* so far as to enable him to abstain from Ill and be saved, but did effectually help him to such a degree that it depended now upon *Cain* alone to do well, and it was very possible and very easy for him to do so, provided he wou'd have given up his consent to God's drawing of him, and have turn'd himself towards the good Spirit that call'd him; or rather, had he not turn'd himself away from them to hearken to the Devil, who, as St. *John* after our Blessed Saviour observes, had a great hand in the Murder of his Brother. But how was this possible, may some say, seeing from his very Birth, either by reason of his ill Education, or of the ill Habits he had already contracted before he slew his Brother, the Devil had now got more the ascendant over him than the good Spirit of God? Yes, notwithstanding all these Inconveniences, this was very possible for him, had he but stood firm to the Grace of God and to the Holy Spirit who does also inspire us, and not given any reflex heed to any of the Suggestions of the Devil or corrupt Nature. For tho' the Devil seconded by the Corruption of our Heart, of our Body, and of Nature, has more Power and Credit with us than the Good Spirit of God, yet is the Spirit of God more Powerful than the Devil, than our and Nature's Corruption: for he is Omnipotent; and when we turn towards him, we feel in our selves with Admiration and Joy the Effects of his Omnipotence against the Devil, against the Corruption of Nature, and against our own: and we see that by little and little the Devil with all his Stratagems leave our Soul, and at last all these Enemies vanish and melt at the Presence of God, like Wax before the Fire, when he is pleas'd to shew himself in a Heart that entirely opens and resigns it self to him.

XX. A Deduction of the manner how Cain and others might have resisted the Devil,

XX. Whoever should go about to resist the Inspirations, Temptations and Motions of the Devil within him by his own Strength, his own Endeavours and Motions, would be so far from effecting it that he would only increase his Confusion and Darknes. To do this, a Man must turn away his Soul from all the diabolical Images and Motions, and turn towards God his Desire empty

empty of every thing else but a hearty Wish for his Holy Grace. Then the Divine Light, that pressed up-
 on the door of the Soul, breaks into it and mixes it
 self with her Faculties and Acts: and the Tendencies
 of its divine Rays being straight, pure and uniform,
 they do by their Rectitude stop and set right the Boyl-
 ings and irregular Motions raised by the Devil. 'Tis
 well known that any hot and boyling Liquor grows
 calm and cool being exposed to the Rays of the Sun;
 and that the Flame of a Fire loses much of its Force
 in them; the Reason is this, the Rays of the Sun
 piercing these Objects in straight Lines and after a fixt
 and constant manner, the Rectitude and uniform Firm-
 ness of 'em stops the confused and stragling Motions of
 the Liquor and Flame when exposed to 'em. A fair
 Emblem this of the manner how the good Spirit of
 God extinguish's in us the Temptations and Force of
 the Devil. The Will of the Devil can not sympa-
 thise with the Rectitude and Straightness of the Light,
 for his Element is Confusion and Darknes: and so,
 as soon as he finds this bright Rectitude which he does
 by feeling his Element grow fixt by the simple and di-
 rect Penetration of the Divine Light, to which the
 Sinner exposes his Soul, he quits that Soul with
 Shame; for he can neither abide nor overcome the
 Light. The Action of the Light (which is God himself)
 being stronger than the Devil, he sees he shall be con-
 quered by it, besides that the Sentiment of it is horri-
 bly painful and tormenting to him. Therefore it
 is that he is put to flight and routed by the Light of
 Faith, and all his fiery Darts and Efforts rebound
 back upon himself alone, and pierce him with Fury
 and Rage.

XXI. This is to be understood when the Soul con-
 sents, and perseveres so to do, to the continuance of
 the Light of God within her, and continues in the
 Aversion and Abhorrence of the Efforts of Satan, who
 does not quit his hold for the first Repulse. But if
 after some little Resistance the Soul gives way and
 hearkens to the Imaginations and Motions of the
 Devil instead of turning away from them, then the
 Devil returns stronger, and the Light of God cannot
 enter

XXI. That
 to effect
 this, the
 continual
 Consent of
 the Soul to
 the Action
 of God is
 requisite;
 without
 which the
 Devil gets the better of the Light of God in the Soul.

Chap. V.  enter into the Soul there to work and assist it : because the Divine Operation would then be overcome and polluted ; which is what God will never endure. I say the direct Operation of God would be overcome and polluted ; because there can never be any thing in a resigning Degree in the Soul but by the Consent of the Liberty. It was God's Pleasure nothing should enter the Soul but that Way, no not himself, for Reasons elsewhere given.

XX. *How the Devil becomes prevalent in the Soul, and that yet it has the Liberty to hear God.* XXII. If therefore the Consent of the Will is turned towards the Devil and towards his Suggestions and Motions, the Devil becomes then predominant in the Soul and drives God out of it, who is constrained to stand without at the door and there knock for a season ; which he does during this Life, all which time the Soul is free to lend an ear and give its Consent to God knocking without, or to the Devil though he be already posselt and strongly reigning within, as in *Cain*.

XXIII. *How Men may give way to the Devil, or to God to conquer the Devil.* XXIII. It was his Business, and is still ours and every Man's, to see which we will join with, God or the Devil. We are all of us encompassed and beset with these two Spirits. If we turn our selves toward the Motions of the Devil, as the Inclinations of our Hearts and of our corrupt Nature are, then we joyn and co-operate with the Devil and strengthen him ; but if we renounce the Motions of our Corruption, which are the Vehicles of the Will and Power of Satan, and turn our selves towards God, casting the Eyes of our Soul upon him, then we open to him the door and co-operate with him, who comes to subdue and destroy in us the Works of the Devil. *The Son of God appears even then spiritually to destroy the Works of the Devil ; for that is his Business according to the Scripture (a).*

XXIV. *The Devil enters into Man by means of such Creatures as he sets his Affections upon : how he is driven out of the Soul wherein he reigns.* XXIV. We have here, to make this very useful Remark by the by, we have here I say, one Reason of that Mortification, Self denial and Abstinence, and Poverty of Spirit enjoined in the Gospel ; because there is in all the Creatures and our Commerce with them and our selves some Corruption and Part of the Element of Satan, the Motions of which Corruption are
subj. &c

subject to his Will: the Snares of the Devil are laid and hidden every where, in our eating and drinking, in all our Actions, in walking, speaking, resting, acting, imagining, &c. so that as soon as the Soul is turned away from its Attention and Desire of God, and turned with its Affection and Consent towards any thing of Nature, the Devil does through and with this thing enter in triumph into the Soul, and there builds himself a Tower and Cittadel of Brass by the evil Habits that are bred in the Soul. After which the Devil and his Element being so rooted in the Soul, it costs much Pains to tear them thence. Yet still, one stronger than he may come and disarm and expel him: for the Soul being free to give her Consent to God, who presents himself to her and calls her; if she do so, the Word, the Son of God, the Light of the Soul, comes and acts so powerfully, so constantly, so directly in her by the Rectitude and Purity of his Divine Motions, as has been said, that this by little and little unravels and disturbs all the Motions of the Devil even unto the most inward Recesses of them; and Satan seeing himself discover'd and stopt, cannot any longer keep his Hold. He must be forc'd at last to direct his Attack elsewhere, and being able no longer to manage his Element in Man, he leaves him and spits his Venom somewhere else, where he may be out of Danger of exposing his Shame and his Filthiness to the Rays of the Divine Light, there to be conquer'd and put to flight.

Chap. V.

XXV. And so the most powerful and effectual means to overcome the Devil, not to say the only one, is, not to engage him directly, by considering his Temptations, by weighing them, and formally opposing Acts to Acts, or Thoughts to Thoughts; but to turn away both from them and from the Corruption of our own Hearts, and from the Motions of our corrupt Nature, which are certainly devilish, and in league with those of the Devil, and are indeed their Vehicle and Door; and to turn our selves towards the Spirit of God, looking always on him as intimately present with us and ready to work in our Souls, if we keep them in repose and waiting before him. All this has been said upon

XXV. The most effectual Means to overcome the Devil. In the Examples of Adam, of Cain and Abel, of Seth and his Posterity, we may observe

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occasion may observe

serve the Conduct of Providence towards all Men.

Chap. V.  occasion of the Person of *Cain* and his Corruption, and of the manner how the Devil tempted him, how he might and ought to have resisted him by the Help afforded him of God, and how he was overcome; and we must at the same time apply this to all Men; because in effect my Aim in speaking of *Adam*, and *Cain*, and by and by of *Abel*, and *Seth*, and their Posterity in general is, that what I shall say upon these four or five Examples, may serve to explain the whole Conduct of Divine Providence towards all Men in all Times and in all Cases: for these four or five may serve for all.

For in *Adam* may be consider'd those that are as it were yet wavering or ballancing, not having yet fully determin'd or habituated themselves to Good or Evil.

In his Children of different Tempers may be observ'd the rise of the Inequality of Men from their Birth and from their Youth, though God on his part provides equally and impartially for all.

In *Cain* may be mark'd the Conduct of Divine Providence toward the Wicked, either before they commit their Crimes, or when they are committing them, or after they have committed them.

In *Abel* we shall see how this Divine Providence deals with holy and regenerate Persons, even when they are afflicted and cruelly tormented and kill'd.

In *Seth*, and in some Events that befell his Posterity, we shall see how God deals with such good Men as are not so far advanc'd in Vertue as *Abel*, and with their Posterity; that is to say, with all Men, who since the Deluge are the Descendants of good *Seth* and good *Noah*. Let's go on therefore with what we have to say in the matter of *Cain*.

C H A P. VI.

Of God's Providence in the Permission, Direction, and Conduct of the Sins of the Wicked.

I.  O D having foreseen Cain's Fratricide, and that on purpose to prevent it, made use of such Means as I said, viz. the Inspirations and Motions of his Holy Spirit, of his good Angels and his other Blessings, and indeed of the visible Presence, or at least of the sensible Words of *Jesus Christ* to this wretched Creature. But as he would freely persevere in his wicked Purpose, and yield to the Instigations of the Devil, not regarding the Bars God had set to his Wickedness on all sides, God left off fencing him any longer, and permitted him the use of his Liberty and of his other free Powers. And this Consent of God's that a Sinner should have the free use of his natural Powers, is what is commonly with respect to God, but very improperly, call'd, THE PERMISSION OF SIN.

II. I have (a) elsewhere said something concerning this Permission, but not enough for the full Understanding of this Matter.

Neither the Permission of God, nor generally any Act of God can directly respect what is Evil. God can do nothing actively nor permissively, that is to say, he cannot exert an Act of Permission, in virtue and consequence of which Evil directly comes to pass. Every Act of God's aims only at Good, at Reality and Position: and were Men wise they would never consider Evil under any direct Relation to God; but only indirectly, as thus; Man directly and of his own head will do Ill; and God having found it in vain to have laid Restraints upon his wicked Will, or to endeavour it any longer, consents he should act freely, upon which Man does as he pleases; but what he wills is not Evil but only from the Evil of his Liberty and his Heart, and not in virtue and by reason of God's Permission.

I. *The Permission of Cain's Sin.*

II. *God's Permission does not*

directly respect the Ill, but the real and natural use of our Liberty.

Chap. VI.

Chap. VI. mission, which respects only a naturally real thing, viz. Man's Liberty and its free Act: and besides, God does outwardly direct these wicked Actions so far as they may concern the Good, nay and the Wicked too, as long as they are capable of amendment: and this is what I will more distinctly explain

III. *A more particular Explication of this Matter. What the Divine Permission is. The ground of the present Difficulty.*

III. God's PERMISSION is originally, a Consent that the Creatures should use the Powers and Faculties he has given them: so that with respect to Man it is a Divine Consent that Man should make use of the natural Gifts of his Liberty, Understanding, Will, Imagination, Senses, of the Members and Motions of his Body, and of the Creatures of the Universe. Now as the use of all these could not but be very good in it self, if his Liberty did but conduct it self aright; so there is no difficulty to understand how God might, and really did give him the Permission of all this: but his Liberty not being ty'd nor destin'd to any certain and proper Objects, as his other Faculties were, but having a general Inspection over all things to dispose of them at Pleasure; it might easily so happen that his Liberty might order things, use and apply them after another manner, a shorter or longer time, than the Nature and the End of Things and of his Faculties required. And this would have been Evil; that is, a thing opposite and contrary to the Purpose and Will of God in creating the Faculties of Man and Objects to suit them. Hence arises the Difficulty concerning the Divine Permission. 'Tis ask'd therefore, whether God can permit the Will to be carry'd to Evil?

IV. *How God does not permit Evil.*

IV. There is in the Liberty its physical and its moral Act. The physical Act respects the Principle; and the moral, the End and the Objects. The physical Act is the Liberty's turning its Consent to what side it pleases at its own Choice; and this is not naturally Evil; God permits this and never takes it either from Angels, Men or Devils. The moral Act as to Evil, is this, the Liberty's turning away of its Consent and of its Divine Faculties from God and his Will: and this is what God never permits: 'tis in this Sense that God never permits Sin; that is to say, God never gives his Consent that the Liberty should turn away its Consent and its Divine Faculties from him and his Divine Will:

Will: and 'tis in this Sense the Scripture says expref Chap. VI.
ly: (a) *God hath given no Man Permission to Sin*; or he
has permitted none to do Evil: or if you'll have it in
other Passages, (b) *Thou art a God that willest not Ini*
quity. (c) *Thou haft Eyes too pure to behold Evil.* What
is it then that God does in the Matter of Evil, as to
the Permission or Non-permission of it? It is this.

V. (1.) *First*, When he forefees, or fees Evil, that
is, when he fees that the Liberty turns away its Con-
fent and its Faculties from him and from their true Ob-
jects, and when it turnsthem toward others in an undue
Manner, and will put this in Execution outwardly by
the Powers that move the Body, God does difapprove
infinitely of all this, and wills and defires with the fin-
cereft Ardor and with infinite Efforts that this may ne-
ver be; or if it be already, that it may not continue,
but the contrary may come to pafs.

(2.) *Secondly*, God wills not, nor has he been pleas'd
to take to him the Power to force the Liberty, or
to take from it the Power to will and to do what lies
in it.

(3.) But *thirdly*, becaufe he knows Man in fuch a
State is blind, miffed by his own Darknefs and Corrup-
tion and by the Devil, and that he may turn himfelf
another way were he but inform'd that what he is go-
ing to do is not good; for this end, God without di-
rectly touching his Liberty, ftrikes his Mind and his
Heart with Light and good Motions, his Eyes and his
Ears with good Representations, and by Words of
Exhortation, Promifes and Threatnings; he lays in-
ward and outward Reftraints in his way that his Fa-
culties fhould not execute what his Liberty has com-
manded 'em; and thus he extraordinarily and almoft
in a fupernatural and miraculous way ftops their Acts
and their Functions.

(4.) But *fourthly*, when notwithstanding all this
Man's Liberty will go on to turn away it felf and its
Faculties from God and his Will, then God ceafes to
oppose him any longer, and removes or rather difcon-
tinues the Obftacles he had laid in his way, and per-
mits that the Liberty and its Faculties fhould without
all lett do what it wills: and this is *Permission* as to
Evil.

(a) *Ecclus.*

15. 20.

(b) *Pfal.*

5. 5.

(c) *Habak.*

1. 13.

V. *The*
Conduct of
Providence
in the E-
vent of E-
vil. What
his Permif-
sion proper-
ly is.

VI. In this Permission, for tho' God sees that this Physical Act is like to be the Subject of an horrible Depravation and Pollution, yet his Permission or his Divine Consent respects not this Depravation or this Sin; on the contrary, God infinitely disapproves it, he infinitely wills to do his utmost to hinder it, except by violating the Liberty, and continually exposing to no purpose his Graces to a resolvedly desperate Heart: for God cannot will these two things, viz. continually to expose his Graces to the Contempt of such as are voluntarily wicked, nor to force their Liberty, which he has immutably and primitively resolv'd and consented to give them to last for ever. It would be absurd and contradictory to attribute these two things to God. This is the solid and essential Truth concerning the Permission of Evil, as it relates to God.

VI. This Permission respects only the Physical Act: for tho' God sees that this Physical Act is like to be the Subject of an horrible Depravation and Pollution, yet his Permission or his Divine Consent respects not this Depravation or this Sin; on the contrary, God infinitely disapproves it, he infinitely wills to do his utmost to hinder it, except by violating the Liberty, and continually exposing to no purpose his Graces to a resolvedly desperate Heart: for God cannot will these two things, viz. continually to expose his Graces to the Contempt of such as are voluntarily wicked, nor to force their Liberty, which he has immutably and primitively resolv'd and consented to give them to last for ever. It would be absurd and contradictory to attribute these two things to God. This is the solid and essential Truth concerning the Permission of Evil, as it relates to God.

VII. How God directs and governs Sin by his Providence.

(a) Supr. S 2.

VII. When I say God suffers our Liberty to do and cause to be done by its outward and inward Powers such Acts as it will *without hindrance*, this has yet its Exception, as well in relation to the Wicked as to the Good, as I have already hinted (a). As to the Wicked, we must know that as their Heart is a continual Source of Iniquity, which incessantly casts out in great Streams its empoison'd Waters, and is like a great Fire that throws out and increases its Flames *in infinitum*; when God sees they are fully bent to Sin, and that yet there is some Hope they may return to a sound Mind, this Good God does not withdraw all the Obstacles he had placed in their way both internally and externally to stop the Course and Intention of their Actions, but he does no longer continue to set more, or at least he does no longer cast up Banks universally and on all sides against their evil Actions, but only on some. And hence it is that the Evil overflows on one side rather than another. And this, with respect to God is called, *The DIRECTION or GOVERNMENT of SIN*. These are the Obstacles which the good Providence of God casts in the way on some sides against the immortal Source of the Diabolical Corruption which is in the Heart of Man, and it is from these Obstacles that the Waters of this infernal Spring flow and break over on one side rather than on another.

VIII. Did

VIII. Did not *Jesus Christ* hope that this Fountain might yet diminish and even quite dry up; or were it by it self and had no Commerce with the Good, he would leave it alone to it self without casting up any Bank at all against it (as he will the damned, and indeed the Men of the last Days, when Evil shall have its full Swing, as soon as he has separated the Good from among them;) but that he sees, should he universally damm up the external Eruption of the Malice of the Wicked, that in such a Case they would thereby become more corrupt, more enraged, more hardned in their Hearts, more hypocritical and deceitful outwardly; he would doubtless hinder them by universal Obstacles from producing any Evil outwardly. But he does it not but lets their Malice flow freely on some sides; 1. because he knows that by letting it break forth outwardly, this will give vent to some part of their Rage and Malignity, and that this may be of use to them to give them some Remorse, Horreur and Contempt of themselves when they shall see palpably by their outward Commissions the abominable Deformity of that which they knew not so long as it was shut up within their Hearts only; and that so this may serve to bring them to Repentance: again 2. because God sees among these wicked persons some others both evil and good that deserve Punishment and some strokes of his Rod: 3. lastly, because God sees some righteous and holy Persons to whom he knows these outward Evils of the Wicked will prove Occasions of Good, of Salvation and Glory. You see here three Reasons and three Effects for the sake of which God does not set general Bars to the Malice of the Wicked, but lets it run over on such sides as he judges most proper to produce the best and the most saving Effects.

By the first of these three Cases may be decided that Question, why God sometimes permits the Evil of the Wicked to be confined within their own Breasts only, and sometimes that it spread outwardly, and why God suffers Sinners to effect their wicked Purposes.

By the second, is seen, why God suffers the Chastisements and Punishments Men inflict one upon another.

And by the third, why God suffers Holy Men to be afflicted, even to a cruel Death by the Wicked.

VIII. Why
Jesus Christ
sets Bars to
the Sins of
the Wicked
on some
sides and
not on o-
thers.

Chap. VI. I don't stay, as you see, to explain all the Passages nor the particular Cases wherewith the Scripture furnishes us. This would be endless nor to any great Purpose. It seems to me much better to give (as I endeavour to do) a general Key, that may serve to explain all particular Instances. To render the Application of this to all Cases more easie I will instance in the Murder of *Cain*, and shew how it came to pass by God's Permission.

IX. An
Applicati-
on of this
Divine
Conduct to
Cain's Fra-
tricide. The
Justice,
Wisdom
and Good-
ness of God
herein.

IX. *Cain* was a wicked Person whose wicked Will God would not force after having endeavoured by all means to win it. He saw he persisted in it, that he inwardly encreased his devilish Rage and Corruption, and that nevertheless this wicked Wretch, under the Pretext that his Wickedness did not appear outwardly, would needs play the Hypocrite and Religious, act the Priest and even (by a strange Blindness of Heart) prefer himself in Holiness to righteous *Abel*. God saw, that should he remove the Banks he had raised against this envenomed Source, or should he not still cast up new ones, and that so the Infection should empty it self without, this might lessen the Rage of this wicked Man, and bring him to know himself; that it might make him afraid and abhor both himself and his Wickedness, and so dispose him to repent. And besides, God saw that *Adam* and *Eve* had set their Affections too much upon this Son of theirs, and had bred him up loosely; and that they had treated *Abel* too slightly (or if any one will out of a spirit of Contradiction oppose me in that) too fondly. This deserved Punishment. As to the Person of righteous *Abel*, of whom the World, was not worthy, God's Will was to reward and glorifie him eternally. What does God now in this Case? He sees that the breaking out of *Cain's* Malice may bring about all these good Aims. But for this End he does not take away all the Barriers that were placed against the Stream of the poisoned Fountain of this wicked Man's Heart; he does not break down the Damns on all sides. For, alas! had he done so, *Cain* would no question have killed Father and Mother, Brothers and Sisters, and all he could have found then in the World, and would have made an Hell of the Earth: for what may not

a wicked Man do that is hurried by the Instigations of the Devil, and utterly forsaken of God? God therefore puts Rubs and Restraints to *Cain's* Rage and to the Devil's in him; he lays Restraints I say upon him on many sides, as to *Adam* and *Eve*, and as to other Persons and Objects, and so secures them from him, but, as to *Abel*, he leaves him an open Field: upon which *Cain* and the Devil send out the Torrent of their Rage on this side, and thus by God's Permission kill this innocent Lamb. Upon this abominable Murder of his Brother, *Cain* bethinks himself, renounces his Hypocrisy, abhors himself, quakes and is humbled, and it may be, becomes truly penitent, and at last works out his Salvation: for Men are too rash and too free in damning, as commonly they do, this poor Sinner. How do they know but he repented and found Mercy? One thing is certain, He might have so done, and that God offered him his Grace during his life. But, they say, he killed his Brother. He did; but did not *David* kill many more when he exposed to Death a band of his faithful Subjects that he might with them be sure to slay the brave and the just *Uriah*, and so hide the detestable Injury he had done him by debauching his Wife? But the Scripture says he did repent, and so it does not of *Cain*. 'Tis true; but neither does it say he did not. And so let us not condemn him, but leave him to God's Judgment. This is certain, that by God's Grace, his Fall might have been to him an occasion of humbling himself, and of his Repentance to Salvation; whereas before, the same Grace of God without his Fall could not work such an Effect upon him through his Pride and sottish Presumption. By this same Fratricide behold *Adam* and *Eve* punished and chastened as they deserved, who doubtless grew wiser upon it. By the same too, was righteous *Abel* rewarded and crowned, the World deprived of what it no longer deserved, and Posterity saw in him a lively and saving Example of Resignation, Meekness, and Patience, and how they were to behave themselves savingly and according to God's Will in the like Case.

X. *How we may and ought to receive Evils as coming from God's Hand.* X. This wonderful Direction of God in regard of Evil, is the Reason why the Scripture speaks sometimes after such a manner as if it were God himself that did or directly caused evil Actions to be done; and how we are to receive 'em as coming from his hand.

An Example of this in Abel. I will propose an Example or two of this kind, which may serve us to explain all other particular Modes of Speech in Scripture relating to this Matter. I might alledge the Example and Authority of *Job* (a), *shall we not receive Evil as well as Good at God's hand?* But to stick to *Abel*, 'tis certain, though it be not expressly said so

(a) *Job*. 2. in Scripture, that he received his Death as if God had with his own Hand inflicted it on him, or as if *Cain*

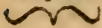
had been the Instrument in God's Hand to kill him: not that *Abel* thought it was God inspir'd him with this murd'rous Rage and Hatred against him, or that he had decreed to inspire him with it, and then by a Physical and infallible Influence, having before by his Decree dispos'd him to it, push'd on and actuated the Thought and the Bodily Powers of *Cain*, to make things go as they did by lending him his *precursus* and *concurfus*, and according to other blind Men, by producing himself immediately all the Reality, and all the Determination that was either in the Soul or Body of *Cain*. CURSED THOUGHTS these! *Abel* saw and knew by the Divine Light that *Cain* was free to think and to move as he pleas'd, having absolutely and for ever receiv'd of God this Gift, without needing either preventing or concurring Help, or any re-iterated Preservation, or any other School-Whimsey, which troubled not the World till many Ages after. He saw likewise that God had done all that he possibly could to take from him his wicked and malicious Purpose, and that hitherto he had of his pure Grace laid all sorts of Obstacles in his way; but that he was not oblig'd, after having since the Fall put things in the State before-mentioned, still to give again and again new Assistance to the Wicked, who, far from answering the end of the first, had only abus'd it; and thus, *Abel* saw, that God would but too much have expos'd his Divine Graces, and the more have harden'd *Cain* in his Wickedness, had he always restrain'd him by extraordinary Methods, and us'd Violence towards him to hinder him from

from being free to do ill. *Abel* could not desire such a thing of God; and though he were a righteous Man, and had done *Cain* no Wrong to be thus cruelly butcher'd by him, yet he consider'd; he had sinn'd against God, and deserv'd to be chasten'd; and besides that, he was in a miserable Life, which it was good to be deliver'd out of. The first of these Considerations gave him to understand that it was just that God, who sent in *Cain's* Wickedness to keep it from breaking out, should no more do so, or not continue to do it any longer as to him; but that he should leave the course of it free, if not on all sides, yet towards him to chasten him for his Sins. The Second Consideration made him look upon this Torrent of Death, as I may say, as a Favour of God to free him from his Prison. Thus it is that good Men receive the Evil of the Wicked, as Effects of God's Justice and Goodness.

The Scripture is express herein upon an Occasion where mention is made only of Punishment. 'Tis when God made it be told *David* after his Sin (a), I will raise up Evil against thee out of thine own House: I will take away thy Wives from before thine Eyes, and will give them to thy Servant, and he shall sleep with them in the face of the Sun: For thou didst this thing secretly, but I will do it before all Israel and before the Sun. The meaning of which we know was this, that *Absalom* should publicly violate his Father's Concubines. And why does the Scripture speak thus? Is it to teach us that God had predestinated *Absalom* to rebel and commit Incest, and that these Women of *David* were destin'd by an immutable and eternal Decree to be violated, and that when it was time God would be the disposing and acting Principle in all these Motions and in all these Determinations, both in their Minds and in their Bodies? I know not what Degree of Blindness and Folly Men must have arriv'd to if they continue any longer in such odd Thoughts. It was God's Will to save and cure *Absalom* as well as any other Man; but he not being willing to be cur'd, and the Fountain of his Corruption striving to flow out on all sides, God restrains it and opposes Mounds against it on this side and t'other, but not on the side of *David* and his Concubines, because *David* had made himself unworthy of God's Protection

Chap. VI.
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Another Example how God directs and sends Evil.  
(a) 2 Sam. 12: 11, 12.

Chap. VI.  tecton on that side. And so, *Abſalom*, who but for the Obſtacles and Reſtraints put upon him by God, would have ſpread the Effects of his Rage, of his Luxury, and of all the Motions which the Devil, and the Corruption of his own Heart and of the World could have inſpir'd him with, being curb'd on all ſides but on his Father's, which God by an Effect of his Juſtice would not ſecure, commits thoſe Crimes which the Prophet had from God threatned *David* with, in ſuch Terms as ſignifie to this Purpoſe; "There is in thy Houſe an ob-  
 "ſtinate Wretch, whoſe Wickedneſs I have as yet  
 "kept from breaking out and bearing down all before  
 "it: but for the future I will not reſiſt his Malice as  
 "to what concerns thy Crown, thy Bed, and thine  
 "Honour: ſo that he not finding himſelf reſtrain'd by  
 "me in thoſe Points, will there commit all his Rava-  
 "ges. This is God's I WILL DO, which is as much  
 as to ſay, *I will not curb the Efforts of his Corruption on ſuch and ſuch ſides, and then there it will break out.*

A Third  
Example.

(a) 2 Sam.  
16. 10.

Likewiſe when *David* ſaid of *Shimei* that curſed him, (a) *Let him curſe, for the Lord hath ſaid unto him, Curſe David*; this, THE LORD HATH SAID, ſignifies juſt what the I WILL DO did, in the Threatning of God by the Mouth of the Prophet *Nathan*; that is to ſay, it ſignifies, that God would not hinder the Production of *Shimei's* voluntary Malice as to his Tongue, ſo far as concern'd *David's* Perſon, who conſidering herein the Juſtice of the Permiſſion and Conduct of God, received it as a Punishment inflicted on him by God for his Offences, humbled himſelf, and gave an Example of Humility and Patience to others, as well as of Punishment, to deter Men from Sin. There are other Fruits that proceed from this Divine Permiſſion, even with reſpect to thoſe that Sin: but I ſhall paſs by them, ſeeing we have already ſeen the like in the Caſe of *Cain's* Murder.

XI. Reasons  
of Types  
and Figures  
as well in  
Ill as in  
Good  
Things.

XI. It muſt be further obſerved from theſe Obſtacles which God ſets to the breaking out of Corruption, that as God may, if he pleaſes, ſuffer the wilful Corruption of Man to overflow outwardly on all ſides or to ſtop it on all ſides, or only on ſuch ſides as he ſhall think fit; it hence follows, that God knowing the wilful and habitual Obſtinacy and Malice of one or  
 more



more Subjects, easily foresees and foretels the manner of their sinning outwardly, or their wicked Actions. For as he sees in general, that unless he threw up Mounds against the Torrent of their corrupt Heart, it would overflow on all sides, so likewise he foresees that if he stop it on such sides, to such a degree, and at such a time, and does not on other sides, then it will break loose just so far, and so will do Mischief to such and such Persons. Again, if God please to resist the Eruption of the Malignity of the Wicked that shall live toward the End of the World, if he be pleased to hinder or not to hinder it, and to proceed in his Methods of setting or removing Obstacles, by regular and uniform Ways, observing constantly some certain Ways and Means, keeping certain Measures justly proportioned to each other, such as his Wisdom and Justice shall suggest to him, in this case, the breaking out of the Malice of the Wicked in Former Ages will be directed, restrained, or break out in a Manner very near that of the Wicked of after-times; that is to say, the Life and outward Behaviour of the Wicked of the First Times, will be Figures of the Life and Actions of the Wicked Men of the Last Times, and the one will be Types of the other. So likewise in respect of the Good, if God be pleased to give good Men in all times his Assistance and Grace by such Ways and Rules as shall bear proportion and likeness the one with the other, which he will observe for Reasons known to himself; in this case, the good Men of the First Ages, their Graces, their Favours, their Behaviour, will be Types of good Men of the Latter Days. Here you see another Fundamental Reason of Types (not to say of Predictions) on which I made no Reflection when I spake of Types and Figures elsewhere<sup>(a)</sup>. I desire what I have said there may not be taken for a full Explication of that Point, exclusively of what is said here.

(a) See Oecon. of the Restor. before the Incarn. Ch. 17. § 2.

XII. Another Remark, by which we may understand what *Fortune* and *Chance* is, is this. that the Divine Direction of Sin being free, God does guide and order it diverse ways. Should God leave a corrupt and obstinately wicked Heart to it self and the Devil that possesses it, without setting any Fence or Damm

XII. What Fortune & Chance is, as well in Good Things as in Ill.

to

Chap. VI. to the Inundation of its Corruption, it would indeed throw its Corruption about without any distinction on all sides, but not all at a time, but now on this side and then on t'other; so that outwardly now this Object then that would be assaulted and annoyed by it. And here would be no certain Rules observed; but it would fall out sometimes here, sometimes there, at all adventure: because the Heart of corrupt Man and his Accomplice the Devil are Principles of Inconstancy and Change; who finding solid Quiet no where, they are always changing their Courses and Postures. It is true the Constitution of Body, and the Influences of the Stars may somewhat fix and determine them; but besides that there is nothing so precisely determined but yet has in it thousands of particular Modes of acting free and undetermined; besides too, that the Liberty of Man and of the Devil, can, absolutely speaking, carry them against all sorts of outward Impressions, it is these very external Impressions, in conjunction with the indeterminate Corruption of Man and the Devil, (whom we suppose to have no particular Restraints laid on them) that make just those Events which we call fortuitous and of *Chance*; in matter of Ill; as in things materially good or indifferent we call *good Fortune* or *Chance*, such Events as God and his Angels leave to be produced by the Influences of Nature according to her general and ordinary Course, without any particular Determination to certain individuals, who yet are advantaged by them, not in Virtue of any special Determination either of God or his Angels, but only of the general course of Nature, still accompanied with the general Blessing of God, and subjected to the general Care of the Angels.

XIII. *Men are differently more or less under God's special Direction, and more or less subjected to the fortuitous Course of Nature.* XIII. Now according as God sees Men more or less obstinately and maliciously wicked, and as they are more or less mixt with others more or less good; and so, according as he foresees that the Obstacles he should set to the outward overflowing of their Malignity would have fewer or more Effects or Consequences either to the good or the bad, he accordingly lays in their way more or fewer Obstacles to restrain them more or less, and he abandons them more or less indeterminately to the course of their inconstant Passions and

and of Nature: so that it is very true that the whole Con- Chap. VI.  
 duct of Men is not alike under the special Direction of  
 God nor his Angels, nor equally abandoned to the ca-  
 sual and fortuitous Guidance of Nature; but there is  
 more and less, yea and nay, as God sees it just, good,  
 and convenient. A wicked Person that chances to  
 live among good Men, or is come of good Ancestors  
 to whom God has made great Promises, or is one for  
 whom there are many Prayers made, shall be more  
 under the particular Direction and Government of  
 God and his Angels, and much less exposed to purely  
 natural Events, than another less wicked Man that  
 lives either by himself, or with such as himself, or that  
 has none of these Advantages above-mentioned. I  
 suppose the Reader plainly sees the necessary connexi-  
 on of these Truths with their Principles without my  
 needing to be perpetually running from Link to Link  
 to the very first to shew the Proof of them *à priori* to  
 such as are not of Capacity to view the whole System  
 at once. But to give the Proof of them *à posteriori* and  
 inartificially, 'tis upon these Truths, that all the Pray-  
 ers of Men concerning outward things, and likewise  
 all the Promises and Threatnings of God about the  
 special Care he will take to do in such a Case such and  
 such good things, and to keep off such and such Evils,  
 to watch over the outward Affairs of some and to de-  
 sert others; if it were not for the Truth of what I  
 have just now been speaking, all these things would  
 be useless, bottomed upon Falstity, and even ridiculous,  
 superstitious and deceitful. The Consequence is evident  
 enough to all but such as will not see, and I don't intend  
 to lose my labour by going about to make them see  
 that are resolved to shut their Eyes. Every Man may,  
 for me, both here and in other things, be clear-sighted  
 or blind at his own Peril, nor will I give my self any  
 great trouble, to make them speak or hold their peace,  
 much less to answer all the trifling Cavils of every ig-  
 norant Objecter against what I have said upon this or  
 other Subjects. 'Tis *Cain* and his Sin that has given  
 me occasion to say what has been said upon this Head:  
 let us continue our Reflections upon him; for we shall  
 by that means see how God's Providence deals with all  
 Sinners and their Race.



XIV. *Unequal Posterity descending from the same Stock.*

XIV. What has been said above concerning *Adam*, that God did not destine nor determine him to beget just such a Number of Children, some whereof were predestinated to Life, to Probity of Manners, and to do such and such things; and others of them to Death, to Wickedness, and the like: but that this was all left to *Adam's* Liberty and Will, and to the State he should be in, whether in a Spiritual or Natural, whether in good or ill; all this, (they that please may look back and see it) I suppose said once for all both as to *Cain* and all Men, and as to all their Posterity, excepting some particular Persons upon their actual Correspondence either in Good or Ill, that may have drawn upon themselves, the one, singular Blessings and Graces of God, and the other, remarkable Punishments, both upon themselves and their Posterity; so that though all had an equal Share and Advantage in *Adam*, yet might it so come to pass that there might be found great inequality among them by means of the different intermediate Stocks interposed between them and *Adam*.

XV. *General Principles by which to judge of the State of the Posterity of Men.*

XV. We must, to see clearly into the different lot of *Adam's* Posterity and of God's providential dealing with them, have before our Eyes the Truths whereof I have proposed the most part in treating of Original Sin, such as these: that Man begets his like in the same State and in the same Degree he himself is in; that God joins the Grace of his Light and of his good Motions to the Soul of every Man all the while this Life and the Time of his Tryal lasts; that if *Adam* received into Favour again, had constantly and absolutely rejected the Grace offered him, so as to have always continued in a State of Damnation, nevertheless the Children which he should have begotten in this State during this Life, would not have been deprived of the inward Offer of this Grace; but that if they had happened to dye before the free use of their divine Faculties, they would by God have been reckoned as Persons that had not received his Grace, seeing in truth they accepted it neither by themselves nor by their Father: whereas had they come to Age and the free Use of their Faculties, it had been their part to have accepted or refused this divine Grace: but that then  
their

their Soul would have had greater Inclination to have refused than to have admitted this Grace: whereas had *Adam* embraced the Grace of God, and strengthened and habituated himself in it, his Children as soon as born, though partaking of the corrupt Root of Nature which is the Devil's Element, would not only have been Partakers of the Inspirations of the good Spirit and Blessings of God, but also of the good Inclinations and Habits of their Father: by means of which the good Spirit would have very easily and without much trouble got the Dominion in them when they should come to the age of full Liberty, and would without any difficulty at all have ruled in them had they dyed in their Infancy, since their Origine was in the Grace of God. All this is applicable to *Cain's* Posterity.

XVI. Supposing *Cain* were wicked as indeed he was; God did not less will the Salvation of his Posterity, than of the Children of those who were Holy; but they were not so disposed nor so apt to give way to the Grace of God as the Posterity of the Righteous.

The first Graces of Calling, of Illumination, and of the good Motions which God presented to *Adam* after his Fall, the Offer and the objective Gift of his good Spirit and of his other Blessings were given him for himself and for his Descendants equally and without Distinction: but the Graces of Divine Retribution and Correspondence, were not given, nor will they be given, to his Descendants, but in Proportion to their Correspondence: so that all the Children of *Adam* equally partake of the first Graces on God's part, but not of these latter, which are conditional.

XVII. Nevertheless, it seems that the Children of *Cain* and of the Wicked have not been either so enlightened or so moved by God, as the Children of *Seth* and of other good Men: And does not this seem contrary to that Equality of Communication which we say was made equally to all Men on God's part? I answer, that this is no way contrary, for two Reasons, first, that in these Lights and Motions of good Men, there are not only the Graces of the first sort, the absolute and primitive ones; but likewise those of Retribution and Correspondence, their Parents

Chap. VI

XVI God wills equally the Salvation of all, but all are not equally disposed. He offers equally the Grace of Calling, but does not equally give the Grace of Correspondence.

XVII. How it comes to pass that the Children of *Cain* and of the Wicked are not so enlightened, nor so moved by God, as those of the Righteous.

Righteous, notwithstanding the Equality of

Chap. VI. having corresponded to God, and they have partaken of the Estate of their Parents; whereas in the wicked there being no such Correspondence, it is no wonder if neither they, nor consequently their Children, have any share in these Graces of Correspondence, and Retribution: but this hinders not but that they might have been equal Sharers in the Primitive Graces.

The *second* Reason of this Inequality is this, because the Wicked for their part being distracted from the inward Voice of God, from his Light and his good Motions, and hearkening to the Devil and their own Corruption, get an Habit of so doing; and so, the Light of God, his Voice and his Strokes become insensible to them; because they are turned away from them, and are habitually and obstinately other ways taken up. And this Disposition of Soul being habitual, passes from Fathers to Children (as has been before proved:) so that the Children of the Wicked and Worldly are born with a Disposition not to hearken to God, but to turn away and fly from him, and to follow the Devil and their own corrupt Inclinations; and the Children of Good Men in quite contrary Dispositions: Nevertheless, God's Providence treats 'em and divides among them all from the beginning, and on his part equally and impartially. He is a Sun that shines for all and to all equally: but such as from their Race and Birth have Cataracts on their Eyes, or hide themselves in Caves, are not equally sensible of his Light.

God on his part at first speaks to all with an equal Voice and equally lowd, but all, through their own Fault, have not their Ears alike good or equally freed from the Tumult and Noise of their Passions, and of corrupt Objects, which hinder the Soul from hearing the Voice of God.

XVIII. XVIII. Thus, for all the Universality and Impartiality of Divine Providence as to the Interior, the Posterity of the Wicked are neither so clear-sighted, nor so moved to Good, nor so much in the Fear of God, nor so removed from the Devil and Vice, as the Good are; on the contrary, they are rather full of Darknes and Evil Motions, of contempt of God, and of Hatred of Vertue and Love of Vice, whatever Attempts God may make upon them in this Life to inspire the contrary.

*Disadvantages of the Posterity of the Wicked notwithstanding the Equality of Providence.*



ry. I will by and by descend to other special Advantages or Disadvantages of each of them, as outward Revelations, and the Privation of them and the like: but this Difference belongs rather to *Seth's* Posterity by *Noah*, than to *Cain's*. I come now to speak something of *Abel*, and of God's Providence over the Righteous.

## C H A P. VII.

*Of the particular Providence of God in relation to the Good, as well with regard to the Evils that may befall them from the Creatures, from wicked Men and Devils, as to those they may commit themselves.*

I.  HAT which made the difference between *Abel* and *Cain* was not this pretended Decree of Predestination and Election made before any regard was had to Man's Correspondence. The Words of Scripture are expressly contrary to this, when God says to *Cain* (a), *If thou doest well, shall not (thy Sacrifice or Person) be accepted?* and St. Paul likewise, when he speaks of *Abel* (b), that it was by Faith that his Sacrifice was more excellent than *Cain's*: and that he and all the Patriarchs pleas'd God through Faith. But I will lay down some Grounds of this Difference between them.

I. Grounds and Reasons of the difference put between *Cain* and *Abel*.

(a) Gen.

4. 7.

(b) Heb.

11. 4, &c.

'Tis probable *Abel* was begotten when *Adam* and *Eve* were in a more exalted degree of Perfection and Divine Love than when they begot *Cain*; and it may be educated him better, or spoil'd him less than they did *Cain*: it may be too, that when he was born the Conjunction of the Heavenly, Elementary, and Earthly Bodies, which influence Man's Body, was more Favourable than at *Cain's* Nativity. Though Vice and Vertue depend not upon Matter, yet 'tis certain that a good Temperament is as assisting to Wisdom and Vertue, as an

Chap. VII ill one is to Folly and Vice. When I speak of Influences, I don't pretend to vouch for all the Fooleries of Judiciary Astrologers; so neither do I take Judiciary Astrology in it self to be an ill grounded or despicable Science: It is by no means so, could we but tell how to find it out, and distinguish the true one and its true Principles from the false. I have sufficiently given my Opinion upon this Point elsewhere (a), for any that have a mind to know more of it. But what chiefly made the difference betwixt *Cain* and *Abel* was this (understand me in quality of an admittive and occasional, not of an efficient and real Cause of God's Gifts :) *Abel* had corresponded to all the Invitations, Calls and Motions of God; and as God augmented his Graces of Divine Correspondence and Recompence, he surrender'd himself up to them, and faithfully comply'd with them, in the manner as has been shewn at large in that Treatise that speaks of the Operation of God and the Co-operation of Man. So that *Abel* grew daily more and more the Object of the special Providence and singular Care of *Jesus Christ*, the more faithfully he adher'd to his Inspiration and Illumination.

II. The Impartiality of Providence in this Diversity.

II. Now this is no Partiality in Providence, that things so standing, *Abel* was more favoured than *Cain*. This Preference was an Effect of the Justice, Truth, and Goodness of God, and not of a partial, unreasonable, capricious mere Good Pleasure, as some Men phancy, whatever specious Names they give it. It was *Just* that God should in a more special manner turn towards him who turned away from every thing on purpose to be wholly his. God having made known to Man this Truth, that he would take into his special Grace and Protection all that resigned themselves to him, his Truth was concerned to see this ratified by a more singular Providence and a larger Effusion of Graces upon such, than upon either the rebellious or careless Sinners. Lastly, the *Goodness* of God cannot but communicate it self in the largest measure, and indeed boundlessly to all that are disposed to receive it. Nor does this at all hinder but Providence was as watchful over *Cain's* Salvation and altogether as impartial, with regard to *Cain's* State and Correspondence,

spondence, as it was over *Abel's*. dealing with him but answerably to the State he was in. Chap. VII

III. When *Abel* had attained (by ways I have elsewhere observed) to the State of perfect Resignation to God, of solid Righteousness and Regeneration, God was then no longer upon the reserve with him: *Abel's* and God's Interests were the same thing; for he was one with God. The Thoughts, Passions, Desires, the Motions, Words, the Walking and Resting, the Eating and Drinking, the whole of *Abel*, was God's as much as if it had concerned him immediately. Therefore did God also dispose, direct and govern all that belonged to him by a most special Providence and Wisdom, by most particular Inspirations and Motions of the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, all whose Treasures were *Abel's*, nay the whole World and all God's Works, according to *Sr. Paul's* Words to the Saints (a): *All is yours, you are Christ's, and Christ is God's*. Nevertheless, as in this World a weak and innocent Child, though all his Father's Goods be his, yet is bound, even under pain of Theft, not to use them against his Father's Will, but to leave them to be managed and used even by Slaves, and to receive no more than his Father pleases, and just as he pleases, till he be of Age: so *Abel* and other Holy Men are obliged by God till the Resurrection of the Just to wait for the Enjoyment of God's Works and the Fulness of his Favours; and this the rather, because the Works of God, the World and the Creatures are at present covered over and quite filled with the Curse, and are in a great measure therefore under the Devil's Power; because the Righteous are as yet among the Wicked, with whom there are certain measures to be observed, and are themselves as yet full of Bodily Infirmities, as well as Spiritual ones, as to the things of the World, not knowing of themselves what is better or worse for them, and indeed it being their Duty not to look after such things out of Curiosity and beyond Necessity, as well to avoid all hurtful Distraction, as not to expose themselves to Vanity, Pride and the Cheats of the Devil.

But *Jesus Christ*, whose they are, knows and can do all things for them: he therefore, from the first entire Resignation of all that concerns them into his Hands,

III. *All is the good Man's: tho' he must not meddle with any thing himself, but remit all to the disposal of Jesus Christ. God's most singular Providence over his Servants in all things.*

(a) 1 Cor. 3. 22.



Chap. VII judges and chuses for them, and by an especial Care, and in a most wise and suitable Manner, guides all their Affairs and Occurrences which they could neither have discovered nor ordered. He prepares their Way before them, and guides their Steps in it; he chuses their State for them, their Labour and Rest, Coming in and Going out, their Speech and Silence, Health and Sickness, Life and Death, the Time, Manner, and Circumstances of every thing; so that *not so much as a single hair*, to speak in Scripture-Language, *falls from their head*, but by the Direction of their Heavenly Father, *being all numbred*, and observed by him; and if God by his general Providence takes care of the Lillies of the Field, and provides Meat for the Birds, and if *a Sparrow falls not to the ground but by the Laws and Will of his universal Providence*, how shall not his most special Providence, his particular Providence of Correspondence to his Friends and Dear Children entirely abandoning themselves to him, not provide them with Food and Raiment, and not after a most singular manner dispose of their Life and Death? *Jesus Christ* puts such Questions as these, to shew that these are such indisputable Truths, that one cannot think of denying them without manifest Absurdity and Impiety both. And so I won't stay to quote a hundred and a hundred Passages there are in the Scriptures to this purpose.

IV. *The divine Providence in what befalls good Men from Nature, from the Wicked, and from the very Devils.*

IV. Such holy Souls, regenerate and resigned to God, are no longer under any Fatality, nor under the fortuitous Hazard of Events and of the Course of Nature, but under God's Hand and the Wings of the Most High. Not that the things of the Elementary World and natural Accidents do no longer affect them, or that they were not at all now subject to them. We see the contrary, that they are laden with them, and even persecuted, and often groan under these Burdens and rigorous Usage. But what is peculiarly their Comfort is, that they are not subjected to them by the mere natural and fortuitous Course of Thing, but by the special Will and Providence of God, who interests himself in all these outward Occurrences so far as his Friends are concerned in them, and in divers ways brings them upon them, sometimes according to their natural course, at other times by changing, encreasing, lessening, continuing,

tinuing, lengthening or shortening them, as their occasions require, as his most singular Providence and particular Good-will to his Friends sees most proper for promoting their Salvation and his own Glory. So that the true Children of God are guided and provided for in a special manner by him in the very midst of all the Inconstancy of Nature, in the midst of the Wicked, and even of Devils themselves which surround them, but as to them are under Chains: in a word, all the Creatures of Heaven, Earth and Hell are under God's restraining Hand as to, I do not say, the Wicked and Ungodly who are not to flatter themselves with this paternal Providence, but as to such Souls as are truly resigned to God and filled with his Love. The Devils cannot come near them without God's special Leave, as may be seen in the Book of *Job* (a), and in *Christ's* Words to St. *Peter* (b), *Satan has desired to sift you as Wheat*. Wicked Men can neither hurt or afflict them or put them to Death, but just as God by his Hand and Counsel determines the Course and Ways their Malice shall take, by putting a stop to it, more or less on the side he thinks fit; as the holy Assembly of the Apostles acknowledges in saying thus to him (c); *Against thy holy Son Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the people of Israel are gathered together, to do all that thy Hand and thy Counsel had before determined to be done* (d): Not that God had before, by a preventing and antecedent Decree will'd or consented, that these People should be of so monstrous a Wickedness as to sin thus against God; but that God foresaw; 1. That after he had done all that was possible to root their Wickedness out of their Hearts, yet would they as to the generality voluntarily continue in it; 2. That the Torrent of their Malice would have violently carried away *Jesus Christ* and all the Saints a thousand times and a thousand ways, had they but had an Opportunity, and had this Malice been left to it self: 3. That God would not for the Wickedness of the Ungodly, forbear to send his Son for the good of others, and even of all, letting him converse, live, and die among Men, both himself and his Disciples after such a manner as tended to the saving

(a) *Job*  
 Chap. 1,  
 and 2.  
 (b) *Luke*  
 22. 31.

(c) *Acts*  
 4. 27, 28.

(d) This  
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 thus, *He-  
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do all that thy Hand and thy Counsel had before determin'd to be done.

Chap. VII the World : 4. And after all this, that the Wicked might not by their Malice cut off either *Jesus Christ* or his Followers unseasonably, God cast up Banks against the naturally indeterminate Deluge of their Wickedness; his *Hand* and his *Counsel* were pleased to bridle it outwardly on most sides, and leave it open only at such a time, in such a way, and only to such a Degree of Violence, marking it out a way with his Finger, as he sets to the Sea its Bounds, saying to it (d), *Here shall thy proud Waves be staid and broken, and shall go no further.*

(d) Job  
38. 11.

V. God determines none to Evil. How he determines the Behaviour of the Wicked.

V. I must say it again; this Place in the *Acts*, and others such like, do not mean that God determines Men to Evil either by Decree or Impression. That is not strictly the matter here treated of. The Question is not to know, whether God had determined the Hearts of *Pilate* and *Herod*, and of the Jews and Gentiles to take pleasure in Sin, to continue obstinately in it, and not to hearken to the Voice of God, but to follow the Suggestions of the Devil and their own corrupt Nature. God forbid we should think God had determined them to chuse Sin and Death, and to forsake the Grace and Love of God : for the contrary is true, that God had done and would still have done all that possibly he could to determine them to Good. But it being impossible he should will the forcing their Liberty, and foreseeing the generality of the Men of of those times (without fixing upon any Single Person) high and low, Jews and Gentiles, would obstinately adhere to the Party of the Devil and Sin, and then would give themselves up to all manner of Mischief, and bear down all that was Good before them, and consequently *Jesus Christ* among the rest; upon this it was that *his Hand* and *his Counsel* interposed, to determine it, or if you will to determine them; not to determine a Will that was balancing between Good and Ill, to chuse the Ill rather than the Good; but to regulate and determine, to limit and bound the Violence and outward overflowings of a Will, that was already antecedently and obstinately determined against the Will of God, towards the Side of Evil, of Iniquity and Mischief, which it was generally and indeterminately ready to commit in all Kinds and all Ways. 'Tis here



the Hand and Counsel of God intervene, and do indeed *Chap. VII*  
*determine* the Breach and outward Course of this Malice of theirs; that instead of breaking out on all sides, and making a thousand direful and diabolical Ravages, as it would have done had not God's mighty Hand restrained it, it should be let out only on such a side, and on that no farther than the Bounds set it by the Hand of God, straighter or wider as he saw most convenient for his own Glory and the Salvation of his Children.

VI. But good Men must not be negligent, upon pretence of this so special Providence of God, nor be less upon their Guard, idly waiting for, and foolishly expecting God's particular and extraordinary Help. It is God's Will they should (as much as in them lies) in his Fear, make use of the natural Means he affords them, seeing his End in creating Nature was to manifest himself and to operate by it: he therefore that rejects Nature without Reason, rejects the Work of God and the Manifestation of himself which he designed by it; and besides, God will not have us despise the Gifts of Prudence and Wisdom, of Circumspection, of Moderation and Counsel, which are all Gifts of his Good Spirit, which those that love him certainly will not despise. So that such giddy and presumptuous People who on pretence of resigning themselves to God's special Providence, without any Necessity rashly expose themselves to Hazards and Dangers, are rather Contemners of God the Creator, and indeed of the Holy Spirit too and his greatly valuable Gifts of Prudence, Order, and Wisdom, than Persons truly resigned to God, who is a God of Order, Measure and Regularity in all things, an Enemy to Precipitation and Confusion; which is the Devils Element, not God's.

VII. God makes use always, as far as may be, of the most natural and shortest Ways, and will not constantly be a doing visible or invisible Miracles; and this chiefly for two Reasons; the *one*, because this kind of Operations of God are not absolutely preventing and antecedent, such as he does for Man as out of his meer good Pleasure only; but these are Operations that are done in correspondence to some former Carriage

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Chap. VII age of Man's, which God intends then as it were to recompence. Now an imprudent or careless Conduct of ones self is no proper Means to engage God to make such mighty and glorious returns; there being no Grounds for any return at all. Therefore this is no proper Way to move God to work Miracles in favour of us. The other Reason is this, that God does not correspond by the extraordinary Effects of a special Providence but only to supply the Defects of natural Causes, or to carry things higher than by natural Causes alone they would have gone; which supposes they have been made use of already as far as possible, and that it was God's Providence that employed them, and then added to them what they wanted to the attaining the End aimed at. And this Assistance which God thus gives by his Providence, must be understood of *Jesus Christ's* acting thus either himself immediately or by the Mediation and Ministry of his Angels.

VIII. *When God's Providence be wanting to good Men when it suffers them to fail.* VIII. It is somewhat harder to comprehend the Manner of God's dealing with good Men with reference to their Sins, which it should seem God permits when it was in his Power to hinder them: how must we understand this? Why does he not give them his Grace, his Light, and his Strength, in such Proportions as they desire and beg of him? This seems to give some Grounds of Complaint against the Divine Providence, which good Men are tempted to believe often fails them upon these Occasions. To this it is commonly answered, and very well to stop the Mouth of all Murmurers, that seeing Man since his Fall deserves nothing but Hell; and seeing there is still within him an infinite number of secret Evils which he sees not, and which indispose him for the receiving of God's Grace, seeing heretofore when God offered his Grace he rejected it; and seeing it is but fit the Providence of God should manifest his Justice in his Dealings with Men; that from all this it follows, that no Man has Reason to complain of God, not only when he does not send such Measures of his Grace as we beg he would, but should he give us none at all. And this should stop all Murmuring.



BUT upon my Supposition, that notwithstanding Man's Unworthiness, God still continues after his Fall to offer even to the Wicked themselves all his preventing Graces, to draw them out of Sin and to hinder them from committing it, how is this consistent with the actual Failings of good Men, when they are done against their Wills? That wicked Men fall for all the Tender of God's Graces is no wonder, since they freely turn away from them. So likewise neither is it strange that good Men should fall when they are wilfully careless. But when their Will continues steadfast and grows too, in Goodness, that for all that they should commit such Faults as they would not, and do beg the Grace not to commit, yet do not obtain it; this is what is hard to reconcile with the liberal Providence of God, which must be so particularly concerned for them, unless we say it fails them in their need.

IX. Much may be said upon this and other Cases of the like nature: but without engaging my self so far, I shall content my self to say a Word or two upon the principal of them. and the rather because you may find elsewhere (a) Matters and Reasons of the like Nature with these here, upon which I shall not now enlarge.

IX. *Answers to this Difficulty.*

(a) *Oec. of Co-op. Chap. 9. § 20.*

First then, God never fails, nor ever will, to supply good Men with all possible Graces that are necessary to make them avoid all mortal Sin, or such as extinguishes and is inconsistent with the Love of God. Good Men never sin so, but inexcusably and by rejecting the Grace that God offered them to preserve them from such Falls. But God having done all that could be done for them, without offering Violence to their Liberty; if they will Sin, all that God's Providence then does, is so to dispose of the Eruption, the outward Tendency, Ways and Circumstances of their Fall, that in case they be willing to rise again afterward when God calls them, this their Fall may be an Occasion to them to humble themselves, and to be more faithful and firm in their Resolutions of Obedience for the future.



Chap.VII *Secondly*, As to Sins of Infirmary, of which I have spoken in another place (*b*). I say, God likewise always presents his Grace to enable us to avoid them; and that this Grace is sufficient for that purpose without any other degree of new Grace. But I say too, that this Grace does not always give a sensible Manifestation of its Operations; yet is not the denying this Manifestation a denying of Grace; on the contrary, this hiding of the Manifestation of God's Grace, is it self a Grace; and the presence of this Manifestation is oftentimes such as could not subsist without great Damage to the Soul, which God is pleased to preserve it from, by not manifesting himself to it thus openly, though both Himself and his Grace are so mightily and powerfully present as to be able in a Moment to make Man perfectly like an Angel, if his Disposition, or rather his Indisposition, could bear it.

X. *The wonderful Conduct and Goodness of God's Providence when he permits the Faults of good Men.*

X. For the better understanding of this Truth, we must consider, that God's Providence is chiefly concerned to keep his Children from the Fall of the Devils, from Pride, Self-acquiescence and Satisfaction, and from Spiritual Self-love: from all which nothing but Humility can secure them. But an actual or weak Humility could not stand out against the World, the Devil and our own Corruption, unless it grow into an habitual one. Nor can an habitual Humility be acquired but by repeated Convictions and a continual View of our Imperfections and Weakness, and of such Failings and Faults as we commit, even against our Wills. For this reason it is that God, to make so great and cardinal a Vertue, as habitual Humility to spring up in the Hearts of good Men; does not suffer his Grace in them always to manifest it self. Whence it comes to pass that the not seeing the Rays thereof, or not feeling the actual Heat of it, at some certain Junctures, they fail and fall: but the Lord holds them by the Hand, and they rising quickly again through the Divine Assistance, profoundly humble themselves before his Divine Majesty, who by this Means produces in them this wonderful Gift of habitual Humility, by which alone they can be preserved from the Fall of the Devils.

And is not this Providence of God altogether wonderful? And is it not much more for their Advantage than if God had then manifested in them the Presence of his Grace, and had thereby prevented such an Act of Failure and Infirmary, which good Men with they might have been able to have avoided?

XI. No, the Adorable Providence of our God never is wanting to the Prayers and good Desires of his Children, but grants them more fully and perfectly than they themselves could wish. Suppose one should wish and beg of God, the Grace, not to fail in such and such things. What does God here? He grants such a one his Grace in Substance, or rather it already dwells habitually in him. Suppose God make the Manifestation and Activity of it appear in him; then indeed it will so come to pass that such a Person shall not fail in such and such things; but likewise, so far will our Human Weakness be from finding therein any certain Occasion of growing in Humility, that it will rather take Occasion thence to be tempted to Self-complacency, Vain-glory, Self-adherence and Self-love, which is doubtless a much greater Danger and less Advantage to such a Soul, than if it had failed, and from this Defect had taken occasion of advancing in sound Humility. Whence we see that God hears and fulfils in substance the Desires and Prayers of the Soul, much more solidly and fully than she thinks and wishes for, even by not formally hearing her in that particular Manner that she prescribed him, as I may say, or as she required and begg'd of him by her Prayers, that were determined and confined to certain particular things.

XII. And there is somewhat more yet in this; for the Desire and Prayer which the Soul made for Grace not to fail in this or that Instance, is particularly heard, though indeed she actually fail; because this Fall of hers being thus involuntary, and the Soul having ardently desired the contrary, God accounts this her Desire for the Deed, and does not impute her Failure to her as Sin and Evil, in Consideration of her Good-will not to fail. And as this Good-will takes away and annihilates, as I may say, the Malignity which otherwise would have been in such Failing, so

Chap. VII

XI. *God does in Substance and more fully hear the Soul which he lets thus fail, than if he heard her in the very way she desires.*

XII. *He hears the Soul even with regard to what she wishes.*

Chap. VII by the same Reason and through the Grace of God, such a Fault cannot hurt her.

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said Diffi-  
culty.

XIII. I shall not mention other Reasons for which these sorts of Faults and Falls may happen; because in many Cases, such Events are easily reconcilable with the Plenitude of God's Providence, as it would in this Case for Example, should the Soul take Pleasure in such sort of Falls: for then there would be no Reason to wonder if she fell, and that God suffer'd her so to do, without any Diminution to the Greatness of his good Providence. *Secondly*, When a Man voluntarily and without necessity lets his Mind be distracted from the Sense of God's Presence, there is no wonder if he neither see nor feel the Manifestation of the Divine Grace, and consequently if he then come to fail, notwithstanding all his former good Purposes. *Thirdly*, When his Good-will was but a *Velleity*, but an imperfect and half Desire, 'tis then no marvel if he do not find himself in full Possession of the Grace of God. *Lastly*, When Souls have yet left in their Ground many habitual Impurities that must be driven thence and made to break out, the Justice of God, and indeed the very Light of his Grace must needs discover them and make them appear, as has been seen when I treated of *the Purification of the Soul*†; These four Cases, and it may be several more, are not so hard to resolve, as is that wherein we suppose the Soul pure and of a perfectly good Will, and greatly troubled at such Failings, and heartily desiring to be freed from the commission of 'em, and that never takes off her Thoughts from God, but by the indispensable Necessities wherein the Weaknesses of our Nature engage us, and yet comes to fall; but withall, after such a manner as shews the adorable Bignity of God's gracious Providence.

† Vol. 5.  
Chap. 5.



## C H A P. VIII.

*The impartial Conduct of Universal Providence towards the Posterity of Seth and Noah, Good and Bad, Heathen and not Heathen, Ordinary and Extraordinary Persons.*

I.



It remains that we make some Reflections on the Posterity of *Seth*, which was the only one that peopled the World by *Noah* a Branch of it, the rest having been all cut off by the Flood; and we must see how the Divine Providence has universally and impartially taken care of the Salvation of this Posterity, notwithstanding the fearful Inequality there has been, and still is and will be hereafter (but for a short time only) between all that have or shall descend from it.

II. All that has been said of *Adam*, of *Cain*, and of *Abel*, viz. That God did not antecedently destine nor determine absolutely their Liberty, their Acts, Salvation or Damnation, no more than he did the Number, Acts and State of their Posterity; all this must here be supposed.

III. Were all Men in a State of Equality, at least as to things Spiritual, there would be no Difficulty to reconcile this with the Universality and Impartiality of the Divine Providence; and there would be but very little to shew how the outward Estate of Men may be unequal, though the Divine Providence be impartial. But it is well known, there are Men more and less enlighten'd. more and less mov'd; some in a State of meer Beasts, others in that of Damnation and of Devils, and others again in a State of Salvation; that some have the Advantages of Revelation, of Graces and Blessings which others have not; not to mention the Changes and Inequalities that happen upon the Revolutions of Kingdoms and Monarchies, the State and Alteration whereof draw after them a Train of Consequences

*I. The Design of what follows.*

*II. The Supposal and Application of the preceding Discourse.*

*III. The Difficulties in question: How the Inequality of the State of Men agrees with the Universality and Impartiality of Providence.*

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quences that reach and affect the Spiritual Condition of Mens Souls, and by that means their Eternal Salvation too. And here lies some Difficulty in conceiving how so prodigious a Disparity can consist with Divine Providence, upon supposition that it is universal and impartial in its Care to procure the Salvation of all Men.

IV. *The Solution. Preventing Graces are originally Equal: those of Correspondence make the Inequality, notwithstanding the Impartiality of Providence*

IV. See here some Truths and Principles, which in my Opinion, ought to satisfy us, and let us understand how all sorts of Events, though never so different and unequal, are very consistent with the Universality and Impartiality of this Divine Providence. The principal of these Truths depends on the Distinction that has often been made between such Graces of God as are Preventing, and such as are of Correspondence. We have seen that God not only prevented Man before the Fall; but likewise that after his Sin he has restored him by the preventing Gifts of his Light, of his good Motions, of the Care of his Angels, and of the Blessings of Nature. These Offers and Graces continue during this Life. But there are besides these, other Graces, which consist, either in the inward Insinuation and Fructification of these first Graces, or in their Augmentation, or in the Gift of new ones. These are such as God will not give but by way of Correspondence and Reward, and this more or less as Men do more or less correspond to him. Now we know Men are free to correspond or not. Therefore upon this account we are not to wonder there should be an Inequality among Men, notwithstanding the Universality and Impartiality of the Divine Providence. It is because some correspond to God, and others will not. The Impartiality and Equality of God's Justice, requires that upon their correspondence he should deal differently with them; and as 'tis fit it should happen to every one according to their Choice, that unequal Things should be given to those that have made unequal Choices. We must not judge of the Equality and Impartiality of God by comparing one Act of his Providence with another Act of the same Providence, but by comparing one Act of this Divine Providence with the Disposition, Correspondence and Choice of one Subject, and by comparing another Act of the same Providence

vidence with the Disposition of another Subject. And here we shall find a most perfect and just Equality and Proportion. We know that in a well ordered Government true Justice is equally dispensed to all, that she has but one Balance and one Weight, and yet that she treats very differently those whose Cases are unlike, without any Prejudice to her Impartiality and her Equality.

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V. Thus therefore must we not wonder if among the Children of *Seth* some were wicked, worldly, and lost, and at length destroyed by God's Judgments in the Deluge, and if there was among them too a most righteous *Enoch*, with whom God was so peculiarly familiar as to take him out of the World miraculously without his ever dying. That he should in the same, or much after the same Manner, so familiarly communicate himself to just *Noah*, as not to suffer him, by a singular Effect of his Divine Providence, to taste Death with the first World. Nor did this proceed from any Partiality or Decree more in favour of some than others before any regard to their corresponding with God's Preventing Graces. *St. Paul* observes in his Epistle to the *Hebrews* (a) that they pleased God by their corresponding to him *through Faith*. Had others, who would be and would continue wicked, been willing to comply and to co-operate with God's Preventing Graces, as *Enoch*, *Noah*, and other Holy Persons did, God would have done them the same Favours in Substance though some other way, than by translating them into Heaven as he did *Enoch*: for God has infinite Ways of doing accessory and outward Kindnesses, that shall be the same in Substance with regard to Mens real Happiness and Perfection.

V. The Application of these Truths to the Posterity of *Seth*.

(a) Heb. Chap. 11.

VI. This Truth would sufficiently make us comprehend the substantial Equality there is in all the apparent Inequality in the Conduct of a God, that is universal and impartial towards all his Creatures, were it not that the Darkness we are in raises some Clouds of Difficulties that seem to obscure it. There are three or four Instances which I shall here set down.

VI. Four Difficulties about the difference of God's dealing with Men.

I. 'Tis said, *first*, That, my Answer reaching only the Graces of Correspondence, the preventing Graces therefore, especially the inward Lights and Touches

The First.



Chap. of God ought to be equal ; and that yet they are not  
VIII. so in all, as is beyond all doubt known by Experi-  
ence.

*The Second.* 2. 'Tis said, That many before having at all corre-  
sponded, have many Graces that are saving and of  
correspondence, as we see in the Posterity of the Isra-  
elites and of Christians ; and that others are deprived  
or them without having rejected them, as the Chil-  
dren of the Heathen.

*The Third.* 3. 'Tis objected, That those who refuse to corre-  
spond have for all that, Advantages which others can-  
not have, would they correspond never so willingly :  
for Example, Christians, though wicked and rebel-  
lious, have yet the advantage of Revelation, with  
many more, which Pagans though never so honestly  
inclined cannot have as they have.

*The Fourth.* 4. Lastly, they say, That among the generality of  
those that do correspond on one hand, and of those  
that do not correspond on the other, there are still on  
God's part personal and particular Choices, Preferences  
and Exceptions, both among Infidels and among Believ-  
ers ; that there are Vessels of Election and of Wrath  
among the one, as St. Paul and Judas ; and that among  
the other there are Persons more or less favoured of  
God, as a Socrates and a Nero among the Heathen.

VII. *The* VII. It is not necessary for all sorts of Readers that  
*Solution of* I answer these Objections. Those of any Penetration  
*these Diffi-* have no doubt observed that I have already upon di-  
*culties.* vers Occasions laid down those Principles, that will  
give a satisfactory Account of all that is here urged.  
But for the sake of the weakest Capacities I shall more  
particularly set down a Truth or two that will easily  
clear this Point, and will my self make the Applica-  
tion of them.

*The Answer* The Solution of the two first of these Difficulties  
*to the first.* depends on this Truth, That God has immutably so  
*Why Men* appointed that such things as are productive should  
*are une-* produce things like themselves, and in the State the  
*qually sen-* things producing were then in. Therefore, if one,  
*sible and s* whose Faculties are turned away from Evil and Dark-  
*preventing* ness, and are turned towards Light and Good, and by  
*Grace, of* consequence are very sensible and fit to receive the  
*his Light* Impressions of the Light and Motions of God, beget  
*and Moti-* another  
*ons.*

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another in this State, the Person so begotten will from his very Birth have a Soul very tender and susceptible of the Divine Light and Motions; and will need only barely to consent, to come to a very lively Enjoyment and Actuation of them. By the same Reason a Soul turned towards Darknes, towards the Earth, and Evil, will beget one in the same State. But the turning away of a Soul towards Darknes and towards Evil is an Hindrance to the Light and Good Motions of preventing Grace; and the Sensibility of such a Soul being taken up with Low and Earthly things, is thereby far removed from having any lively Sentiments of Spiritual Things. Therefore this Inequality of the Delicate Sense that some have of his Divine Light and Motions, and of the Insensibleness of others in this Point, doth not proceed from God. He strikes, shines, and presses equally on his part, and, may be, much more upon Account of such as are insensible than for others: but they are hardened. A Voice, though loud, is less heard by one at a distance than a lower is by one near. And can we say it is so, because he that is a far off is not called upon so much nor so loudly out of meer partiality, as he that is near is?

VIII. And I dare assert it as a Truth, that would the wickedest Men in the World but forbear to hearken to the Devil, their own Malice, and the Motions of corrupt Nature, the Light of God and his Divine Strokes would prove more sensible to them than to many others, that had not been quite so bad, and even than to many good Men: and this is what has been verified in many, who of great Sinners have on a sudden become great Converts and great Saints. The Reason of this extraordinary Sensibility, is because two Contraries are more easily perceived near each other than otherwise, according to the true Rule, *Contraria juxta se posita magis elucescunt*. So that a Sinner that has never felt any but Motions of Darknes, coming by his turning away from them to feel those of God, which are infinitely contrary to them, may be so lively stricken with them, as to feel himself transported by them as it were from Hell to Heaven, if his turning away from his Sins be sincere and generous, and he at the same time willingly throw him-

VIII. Wicked Men  
may become  
more sensible of God's  
Grace than  
good Men.

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VIII.

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(a) Matt.
11. 29.

IX. *Habits
render Men
and their
Posterity
insensible
of God.*

self into this Ocean of infinite Charity, which cries in the Hearts of all Men more loudly than in the Streets of *Jerusalem (a)*, *come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

IX. To this Reason (of the actual State of the Person begetting and of the Posterity begotten) we must add another taken from Habits that pass from one to another, and get Strength both in the one and the other. For this Reason, one that actually turns away his Understanding from a Light, and from a good Inspiration presented to his Heart by God, to consider and to be moved by one from the Devil or corrupt Nature, such a one I say, that thus renders himself insensible to God in such and such an Act, and then in another, and so on, such an one becomes habitually and in all things insensible of the Divine Strokes, tho' God on his part be always knocking and speaking to his Heart, which is often so blinded as to take the Motions and Light of God for the Temptations and Falsities of the Devil, from which yet God preserves as much as is necessary Sinners that are otherwise of sincere Hearts.

X. *The answer to the second Difficult y*
Some before any Correspondence of their own have (by means of others) some special Graces of Correspondence. The Advantages of Abraham's Posterity.

X. We see hence, that the second Instance has no Difficulty in it, especially when supported with these two Considerations: the *first*, That when the Friends of God pray for certain Persons, or for certain Sinners, God looks upon these Prayers as coming from these Sinners themselves, and upon this ground deals with them by the Correspondence of his Graces: the *second*, That the Graces, even those of Correspondence which God gives any one are for that Person himself, and for all those that shall come from him by Generation. We shall easily comprehend the first of these Truths and its Consequence, by supposing, what is but true, that God does not bestow certain Graces but upon the score of some precedent Acts of his Creature; and that of all the Acts of a Creature there are none more pleasing to him than Love or Charity, but above all, the Charity that is most pure and free from Self-interest, as is the Charity of those Prayers we make in the behalf of others. Now as on God's part there are special Divine Graces, Gifts and Motions for his special Friends, and for their peculiar Acts of Love and Vertue,

Vertue, hence it follows, that when these Friends of God pray even for Sinners themselves, it being impossible for God not to correspond with their Love and Charitable Desires, he hears their Prayers, and so deals out to these Sinners such special Motions and Graces as are designed for his Friends and their Acts. And all this is very just. God therefore enlightens, strikes, and moves extraordinarily certain Sinners and certain Persons that are prayed for. (as St. *Augustin* was by means of his holy Mother's Prayers) nay, he changes, shortens or lessens their Troubles upon the Mediation of his Friends, and all this, as is evident, following the Rules of his Justice, and without the least Partiality. If he does not do so for other Sinners, 'tis because the Justice of his Correspondence will not suffer him to do any thing extraordinary for them. Let us observe by the way the Good of our Prayers for one another.

The other Consideration relating to God's continuing his Graces to Posterity is no less evident: for God never withdraws his Graces when he has once presented and given them. *The gifts and calling of God are without repentance* (a), says the Apostle in just the like case. *Abraham*, for Example, had corresponded to God after a special manner, upon which God plentifully bestowed his Favours on him, viz. first, the Discovery of his Secrets to him (b): *Shall I hide from Abraham what I am going to do?* Secondly, A numerous Posterity: Thirdly, Such a Posterity as should in God's Hand be an Instrument of Blessing to all Nations: Lastly, A Posterity of which he would take particular Care. God might without Partiality give *Abraham* these Advantages rather than to others, because he had corresponded to him in such a manner, that God had not yet met with any that had so nobly and so generously resigned themselves to him. Now because God is true and no Retracter of his Gifts, and since he has made it a Law, that every thing should be like its producing Cause, why should *Abraham's* Children from their Birth be deprived of these Privileges? I grant they do not partake of them by a purely carnal Birth from him, that being a thing common to the Heathen, and to the very Beasts: but they do it in Virtue of the Grace of a true, immutable and constant God, which

Chap. was pleased to unite himself to their Origine and Root.
 VIII. So that if on one hand they partake of the natural Infirmity and Corruption that was in their Stock during this Life, which Corruption is the Element of the Enemy of our Souls; they do also from their Stock partake of the Grace and good Spirit of God joined to this Corruption, bridling, captivating, and even mortifying it; were it not, that afterwards they being of Age come to resist the Spirit of God, and hearken to the Devil; as indeed it came to pass. And yet in this case the Promise of God concerning the Blessings he would bestow upon *Abraham's* Posterity shall be made good at a proper time and upon fit Persons, as *St. Paul* and the whole Scripture declares, that for the sake of *Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David*, and of the Oath made to the Patriachs, God has done and will yet do great Wonders, especially towards the End of the World, of which I have spoken in another Place.

XI. *Yet are not the Heathen excluded from the substantial Care of Divine Providence.*

XI. God does the Heathen no Wrong though he give them not these Graces of Correspondence. He does not for this, cry less to their Hearts, nor does he take the less care of them by the Blessings of Nature, nor even by the Ministry of his Angels. 'Tis true he does not do it in so special a manner. But there is a general Protection of Angels and Administration of Divine Blessings that do always attend upon Nature and Men, which would too become special would Men but correspond to them, whereas they not corresponding, these sorts of Graces do not only not encrease, but the Obstacles which hinder their Communication to Men, daily growing greater, there will at last be no Hopes of bringing over the Wicked, but the time of their Condemnation will be come.

XII. *The Answer to the third Difficulty. Why some without corresponding have greater Advan-*

XII. To the *third* Difficulty I say, 'Tis true, the Children of good Men still have many Graces of Correspondence very advantageous to their Salvation continued to them, though themselves do not correspond with them: for it is not only true that their Heart is more easily susceptible of the Light and Grace of God than other Mens is; but they have this Advantage besides, to know the Will of God by the Revelation of his

ages than others, and that for a long time too. They shall therefore be punished more than others.

his Oracles; which is an *Advantage*, says St. Paul, *great every way* (a), which their Unbelief cannot make void : because God had promised and given it to their Origin for it self and for its Posterity ; and because it is indeed an inestimable Advantage to be born of Persons that are the Friends of God.

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(a) Rom.
3. 2.

But likewise when Men stubbornly refuse to correspond to God, his Divine Providence is so just and so impartial, (so far is it from rewarding these rebellious Creatures by new Graces of Correspondence, so far is it from making those they have by Birth saving to them) that it suffers such Chastisements to fall upon them as are much heavier than those that fall upon the rest of the World that have not the Advantages they had. Their Graces then turn to their greater Condemnation ; and those that have more particularly known the Will of their Father shall be beaten with more Stripes. We need but look into the History of the Rebellious *Jews*, and but observe what God already has begun and will continue to do with Christians, to be convinced of the Justice and Impartiality of his Providence.

XIII. As to the Heathen, should any of them live according to that Measure of Grace God gives them, no doubt God would still advance them higher and higher according to their Correspondence ; till he had brought them to a State of Salvation, though they had no Knowledge of the History and Letter of the Gospel. Their Good-Will would be imputed to them to Salvation, or as a way and means of Salvation, as St. Paul says, *Uncircumcision is reckoned for Circumcision* (b). What God requires of Men to fit them for his saving Operations in their Hearts, is neither Letter nor History, Opinions, nor Notions ; but Humility, Submission of Heart to God, Resignation to him, the Desire of his Love and of every thing that is pleasing to him. When a Heart is thus disposed, God works in it either in this Life or the other, Light and Purification, and all the Graces he is pleased to pour into it. But if God finds any of them so well disposed, as to think it necessary to give them in this Life, even the Historical, Knowledge of himself, he would doubtless sooner work a Miracle than be wanting to them in such a Case.

XIII. God
takes care
of the Pa-
gans pro-
portionably
to their
Correspon-
dence.

(b) Rom.
2. 26.

XIV. Ex-
amples of
this.

(a) The
Life of
Taulerus.

XIV. It will be said, it may be, this is an IF, and a thing spoken in the Air. No, but it is not; and I could give many Instances of it. They whose Eyes are open to see the Excellence of the Writings of the divine Tauler will make no doubt but what the Ignorant Laick relates there, who converted this great Doctor, is a Truth that confirms what I say, and is so much the more certain as being the Case of that very Person who writ this Life. The Example is this.

(a) *There was a certain Pagan, a very sincere and honest Man, living uprightly according to the Law of Nature: who every day lifting up his Eyes to Heaven, called upon him that made him and every thing, and said to him, O thou most High Lord, Maker of Heaven and Earth, thou knowest I was born in this Region and Country, and bred up in the Faith and Religion taught there. But now I hear, the Jews have another Religion, and the Christians another. Therefore, thou Lord that art above us all and hast created all things, I now beseech thee that if there be a better Religion than that wherein I have been instructed from my Youth thou would'st be pleased to favour me with the Knowledge of it, and I will with all my Heart, embrace thy Faith and obey thy Commandments. But if thou deniest me what I ask, and I come to die in my own Religion, without knowing any better, to my thinking I have great wrong done me. This Pagan continuing to pray thus to God, it came to pass, that I writ a Letter to him, by the reading of which he was brought over to the Christian Faith.*

There is also an Example of this in the Lives of the Fathers, viz. of St. Pothimus: and in the Works of (b) Lib. 6. St. Brigitte (b) the Example of an Heathen Woman, Chap. 50. which I find so edifying that I will transcribe it. 'Tis this.

“ There is nothing more pleasing to God than to
“ love him above all things. And I will let you see
“ this by the Example of an Heathen Woman, who
“ without knowing any thing of the Christian Religi-
“ on, said thus to her self. I know very well what I
“ am made of, how I was born: but I think it impos-
“ sible for me to have had such a Body so artfully con-
“ triv'd and compos'd of so many Vessels and Parts,
“ having Senses so wonderful, had not some one so
“ dispos'd it and given it to me; therefore there is a
Creator

" Creator that has made me what I am, a humane
 " Creature so well proportioned and beautiful, and
 " was not pleased to make me a vile and deformed
 " Creature, as Worms and Serpents are. For this
 " Reason I believe, had I many Husbands, and they
 " all called to me, that I should rather run at the sin-
 " gle Voice of my Creator than at all theirs, I have
 " many Sons and Daughters, yet should I see their
 " Meat in their Hands, and come to know that my
 " Creator were hungry, I would be sure to take it
 " from them and offer it my Creator with the
 " greatest Joy. I have Goods and Possessions which I
 " dispose of as I please: but if I knew my Creator's
 " Will herein, I would readily forsake my own, and
 " would dispose of these Goods to the Honour of my
 " Creator. See now what God did to this Woman.
 " He sent her one of his Friends to instruct her in the
 " Christian Faith, and did himself visit her Heart by
 " his Holy Spirit, as it afterwards appeared. For
 " when this holy Man had taught her that God was
 " One, without Beginning and without End, and that
 " it was he that had made all Things, she answered, 'tis
 " very credible that he that made me and all things,
 " has none above himself that made him; and 'tis very
 " likely that he that has given me Life, has himself an
 " Eternal Life. And afterwards having heard that
 " this Creator had clothed himself with our Humane
 " Nature which he took of a Virgin, and had preach-
 " ed the Truth with his own Mouth, she said, cer-
 " tainly we must believe the Words of God. and be
 " by them led to the Practice of all sorts of Vertues;
 " and therefore I beg you, who are a Friend of God, to
 " tell me the Words that proceeded out of my Crea-
 " tor's Mouth: for I will quit my own Will and live
 " conformably to the Words of his Mouth. Upon
 " which this Man of God having spoken to her of the
 " Death and Sufferings of Christ, and of his Resur-
 " rection; she fell a crying, and said, Blessed be God,
 " who hath with so much Patience demonstrated on
 " Earth the great Love he bore to us in Heaven: and
 " therefore, if I loved him before because he created
 " me, I am now much more obliged to love him for
 " his shewing me the right Way, and redeeming me
 " with

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“ with his Blood. I acknowledge my self bound to
“ serve him with all my Strength and with all my
“ Members, seeing he spared none of his to redeem
“ me. Lastly, I see my self obliged to renounce all the
“ Desires I formerly had towards my self, my Goods,
“ my Children and Relations, to desire only my Cre-
“ ator in his Glory both in this Life and in that
“ which shall have no End.

Were there many that thus heartily minded their Salvation, and addressed themselves to God to obtain the Means of it, they would soon find by Experience that God was not partial, and that his Providence watches universally for the Salvation of all. But if they are for the most part indisposed to make this good Use of God's Graces, to what purpose should God offer 'em to them? Should he do it only to make them, as Christians are at present, more rebellious, more wicked and more deserving of Hell? 'Tis certainly a great Effect of God's Love not to afford them these Strokes of his Grace, but to leave them in their Ignorance: besides that their being wholly busied about Earthly Things renders them incapable of understanding any thing in Divine Matters, should they be discovered to them. God gives them so many outward, palpable Graces, and such as are suited to the gross State they are in, and yet they understand not this Method of his, nor submit themselves to him in Gratitude and Love; how then should they understand the most sublime and spiritual Language of God, were he pleased to let them hear it? (a) *If I have spoken unto you of earthly and gross Matters and you understand me not, how can you believe if I speak unto you of spiritual, heavenly and sublime things, says Jesus Christ to Nicodemus?* Having in another place (b) spoken of the saving Means which God affords the Heathen, I shall say no more of it here.

(a) John
3. 12.

(b) Oec. of
the Restor
after Jesus
Christ,
Chap. 13.

XV. The
Answer to
the fourth
Difficulty.
How God as
to the essen-
tial, deals
equally
with all.

XV. To get clear of the fourth Difficulty, we must not confound what is essential or necessary to the Salvation of any one with what is only accessory, ministerial, and given upon the Account of others. Neither likewise must we confound what is essential to Evil with what is only accidental and external. As to what is good, God wills and provides what is essential and necessary

necessary as much for one as others of the Children of those that have corresponded, as much for *Judas* and all *Abraham's* Children as for *St. Peter* or *St. Paul*. He wills and likewise procures for them all what is necessary to destroy the Evil in them. But now if after this equal Provision some are grown greater Proficients in what is essential to their Salvation than others, and more removed from what is essential to there Damnation, this Inequality proceeds from their unequally corresponding, as has been said, without any Partiality in God.

But it is somewhat otherwise in accessory Graces, or in such Goods as may be called external and ministerial. As they are not intended for the personal Salvation of him that receives them, so God may give such, if he pleases, where he will, arbitrarily and purely of his own Will, without any regard to one's Corresponding more than another's; but yet in truth he always had regard to some Qualification or other in the Subject he thus makes choice of. To speak more plainly;

XVI. It sometimes (but extraordinarily and upon necessity) pleases God to grant Men some new preventing Graces, as the Revelation of some particular Truths, the conducting and directing of them in the right Way after such and such a particular Manner, and by such and such Means, and by the Instrumenty of such particular Persons. He must therefore give those he intends thus to make use of, some special and ministerial Graces, which I call *accessory* and outward, because they need them not for their own particular Salvation, but for the promoting the Salvation of others. Now these Graces cannot be given to all; not only because it would but breed Confusion should all set up for Leaders and Teachers; but also, because the Subject of these Graces must first be holy and regenerate, or at least wholly resigned to God. But if there chance to be more Subjects holy and qualified than God designs to make use of in such ministerial Employments; then may he out of many Persons equally qualified chuse which of them he pleased purely because he would, without the least Partiality, and pass by the rest; the Graces of any ones personal and eternal Salvation being not at all

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Gifts ministerial and accessory.

XVI. In his accessory Gifts God has respect to the Dispositions of Persons, and not only to his own pure Choice.

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all here concerned, of which those he leaves out have from him as great a share as those he makes choice of; but only ministerial Gifts, which are commonly so heavy and troublesome, that *Moses*, who had the most extraordinary ones of this kind, far from looking upon them or finding them to be of any Advantage to himself, was afraid of them, shunn'd them, and three or four times refused them when offered by God himself; and complaining to him of this terrible Burden, he besought him he might be eas'd of it, and rejoiced when God took from him some of his Gifts and poured them upon Seventy other Persons; and he was sometimes so grieved and impatient as to let fall some Words that obliged God to shorten his Life. So that none have reason to look upon this as a partial Favour, were it bestowed only out of God's pure Will, without all regard to any thing else. Yet I am of Opinion that God even in these Cases has respect to the Dispositions of the Souls he employs, as well as to their Origin or Parents, and to the Prayers that any put up to him for them, but especially to the Habits and secret Bents of their Hearts. Hence it was that when an Apostle was to be chosen in the place of *Judas*, and when two were presented, both of them holy and well qualified, the matter was referr'd to God, and they prayed him to chuse one according to his knowledge of the inward Disposition of their Souls. *Thou (a) Lord, who knowest the hearts of all Men, shew which of these two thou hast chosen, to take part in the Ministry and Apostleship whence Judas by his transgression fell.*

(a) Acts
I. 24.

XVII. To
Persons e-
qually dis-
pos'd God
gives the
essential,
but not the
ministerial
and acces-
sory Graces
equally. The
Reasons of
this Diffi-
culty.

XVII. Thus even in these Cases God's Choice to extraordinary and ministerial Graces is not grounded on his bare Good-pleasure, and Acceptance of one Person before another: Yet it is certain there is a Difference between the Choice to Graces essential to Salvation, and the Choice to such as are only accessory and ministerial. The first God will at all times, from the beginning to the end of the World, give equally to those that are equally qualified. For Example, If before *Moses*, or in his Days, or after him, if in the Days of *Jesus Christ*, or after his coming in the Flesh, there were to be met with any Persons equally disposed towards God, for certain, God would have given them

the

the same saving Graces in Substance; because such Graces depend not, nor are they annexed to Time or Place, or any outward Circumstances, but only to the Disposition of the Heart: Whereas the Ministerial Graces respecting some certain outward Persons, Places and Times, God gives them not out of these Circumstances to such as it may be had the same Dispositions as those have who live when the Places and other Circumstances meet. Though before the Holy *Virgin* and after her there had been Souls as pure as her self, yet 'tis plain they could not have all been chosen to the Privilege of being the Mothers of *Jesus Christ*. The same may be said of all the other Ministerial Graces of the Prophets, Apostles, and of such like Persons, which cannot be given to any, though equally prepared, but in such Circumstances of Time and Place.

XVIII. But when the Time and other Circumstances wherein God is pleased to grant the World by the Ministry of others some preventing Graces, are come; he does not then ordinarily chuse, precisely such an Individual as *Peter*, *John*, or *James*, because he has so order'd it from all Eternity: but knowing well how many Instruments he will make use of, he looks then upon the Earth to see how Men stand dispos'd; and those he finds the best qualified he takes, and to them he communicates these extraordinary Graces, which he would not have given, nor will ever give at another time to Men of the very same Dispositions, because they will never again be proper and in season. Thus it is therefore that he chuses his Vessels of Election to his Ministry, such as are at that time best qualified, and according to their Disposition (a) *He gives to one five talents, to another two, to another one, according to every one's ability or capacity.* And if any one fail to correspond to these Ministerial Graces, he takes them from such an one, and chuses to entrust another with them that is better dispos'd, as our Saviour shews in the Parable (b). When God foretels and names sometimes before they are born, but extraordinarily, some Instruments he intends hereafter to make use of, 'tis because he has at that very time some under his Eye whom he designs peculiarly to honour, and who are so wholly resign'd to him, as he can by them through the Motions of his Holy

XVIII.
God's Impartiality in his electing of Persons to extraordinary and Ministerial Graces.

(a) Mat. 25. 15.

(b) V. 28.

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Holy Spirit, have, breed, instruct and name the Children he will make use of just as he foretels it. And still this way is extraordinary, and in reward of the extraordinary Piety of some Holy Parents.

XIX. *This is observable too in relation to the Heathen.*

XIX. What has been said of the Choice of certain Persons to Ministerial Graces, wherein God. who may in that Case act purely at Discretion, without regarding the Dispositions of any, does for all that act so impartially and so justly, is applicable not only to such Choices as God has made among his own People, whether Jews or Christians, but also to such as he has made among the Heathens, as of a *Diogenes*, a *Socrates*, and an *Epiſtetus*, and of others, that were Instruments and Ministers chosen of God to enlighten and guide the Men of their Times according to their Capacities. God therein acted in proportion after the same manner, with the same Impartiality, Justice and Wisdom, as was observed he did among his own People. I have elsewhere (a) said something upon this Point in reference to the Heathen, and so shall say no more of it here.

(a) Oecon. of the Incarn. Chap. 13.

XX. *How God without any Impediment of his Goodness and Impartiality, makes use of some wicked Men rather than of others to be the Instruments of great Evils*

XX. As for what concerns the Wicked, and the Choice God seems to make among them of some rather than others to be remarkable Instruments of some Evils, as were *Pharaoh*, *Absalom*, the Kings of *Affyria* and *Babylon*, *Judas*, *Nero*, and many others, I think I have shewn already (b) how God not only sought their eternal Salvation, but likewise how he ruled them in these very Instances; nor have we any thing further to know concerning them, but only why God so dispos'd of these wicked Men rather than of others whom he pass'd by.

(b) Supr. Chap. 5. & 6.

To answer this Question, we must be sure to suppose the Truths above-mentioned, viz. *First*, That God had afforded them as well as all other wicked Men whatever, all such preventing Graces (not those of Correspondence) as were necessary to abolish their Sins, or to lead and prepare them for the Destruction of their Wickedness, which God heartily desired to see extirpated that so they might be saved. *Secondly*, That these wicked Men, and others like them, maliciously revolting against God and his good Inspirations, were resolved to give Life and Vent to their Malice and Corruption. *Thirdly*, Though they all deserv'd to be punish'd,

punish'd, that yet God sees that unless he partly restrain the Floods of their Malice, they would quite destroy one another, and all the Good too.

Here it is that God interposes, and looking how far he intends either to protect or expose the Good and the Bad to outward Chastisements, if he finds that among the Wicked there are some of them more powerful, more cruel, more inclined to such and such Vices than others, and that supposing he puts Bars and Mounds to the Torrent of their Malignity on such sides and not on others, Men will then be chastised to that degree he designs they should, he does in a more special manner on some sides restrain some wicked Men, and leaves them open on others; and so varies their Ways and the breaking out of their Wickedness, as to accomplish his Judgments. Thus the Scripture calls *Pharoah*, and the King of *Assyria* (a) the Rod of (a) *Isa. 10.* God's Fury, the Axe of his Hand which he lifted up: 5, 15. not that God caused and stirred up his Wickedness, which on the contrary he would gladly have extirpated; but this wicked Person being himself unwilling to have it so, and pretending to make it fall upon whom he pleased, God takes this mad Horse by the Bridle, and stops his Course this way and t'other way, and gives him room but on such and such sides, so that he cannot stir outwardly but just where God leads him and Marks out his way. If God does set more Restraints upon other wicked Men as to the outward, I doubt not but it is partly because the Acts of their inward Corruption are not altogether so malicious, and they a little hearken (though very imperfectly) to the good Inspirations of God; and lastly, because too the Inundation of their Malice would be contrary to God's Design of protecting and upholding the World in some tolerable State, and of not yet laying it quite waste by punishing it any more, and this partly for the sake of the Good that are in it and for the Manifestation of his own Goodness.

C H A P. IX.

Of the Divine Providence in the Revolutions of States and Empires. The true Grounds of Civil Government.

I. How Di- I.
vineProvi-
dence has
presided o-
ver the
Principles
of worldly
Politicks
and their
Actuation.



HIS is of a very near Nature to what I shall say when I come to shew the Rise of these great Inequalities that happen in Empires and Monarchies, and a thousand Revolutions and different Events wherein the Nations and People of the World are concerned, and how all this accords with the Impartiality and Universality of the Divine Providence. God beholds the Corruption of Man's Heart, its Extent, Obstinacy and Progress: he has often had Experience of it; and by this, together with his Knowledge of the malignant Disposition of Satan and of natural and external Objects, he foresees that should he leave their Corruption to it self, it would immediately plunge all Nature and Mankind into Confusion by Violence, Murders, Plunderings, Robberies, Whoredoms and by all sorts of Hellish Disorders. This is the natural State of the Gentlemen the Politicians, wherein every one is against every one, and every thing is permitted to every one, and the strongest carries all; but it is by a Diabolical PERMISSI-ON and Malice, as far from the State of true and uncorrupted Nature as God is from the Devil.

God designing to prevent this hellish Subversion of all things, and set these Disorders into some Order, did not for that purpose appoint and allow that all should transfer this pretended Diabolical Right unto one Person, who might use it according to his own corrupt Fancy, and that his so doing should be the Principle and Foundation of all Justice, and that even 'tis God's Esteem too, as blind *Hobbs* that Factor for Hell has published to the World: but utterly disallowing all Mens corrupt Desires, he set Barriers to the Corruption of some more, and of others less, according

as he saw that from these different Restraints there would arise a System of a corrupt World, or of a Policy less disorderly, and more likely to preserve the Good, and to help the Wicked to forsake their Wickedness whenever their Will was disposed so to do. Chap. IX.

II. Thus They whose Corruption was less barricaded, stretched out, like cruel and ravenous Beasts, their Throats, their voracious Fury, their Ambition and Violence over all such as God left unguarded from them. The Great devoured the Less, and the Strong by mere devilish and wicked Ambition enslaved the Weak, so far as God suffered them; who still rules them at his Pleasure. By these methods it was at first that there actually arose Empires, Monarchies, Kingdoms and all these cruel Beasts that did constantly make it their Sport to sink and devour one another, as it is frequently figured to us by the Holy Ghost in Scripture and more particularly in the Revelations of the Prophet *Daniel*. But though this be in truth the rise of all worldly Policy, yet *Two* things must be observed; and I take notice of them the rather, because if I did not, some Slanderers might fancy I here give 'em but too fair an Occasion for their Calumnies.

II. *The Source and actual Rise of great Bodies of Worldly Policy.*

III. One of these things is this, that the Good being the Weakest, and seeing it is their Duty to work out their Salvation among these wicked Men. and also to endeavour to bring them over to God, and to convert them by the Example of a pure and holy Life, they must likewise be subject to them, *not only out of a Principle of Fear*, as the Wicked that are weakest are to those that are strongest, but also *out of a Principle of Conscience* (a), considering and reverencing the Hand, Direction, Ordinance and Disposal of God herein, who lengthens or shortens more or less the Chains of these cruel Beasts, and gives them a more or less spacious Field to range in, and leaves them such and such Passes open to punish other wicked Men that oppress the Good, and stops up others against them, that the Good may live in quiet. This Doctrine of submitting to the higher Powers is so true, that were they the most unjust Usurpers and cruelest Tyrants imaginable, yet would it be our Duty to pay them all Subjection in

III. *The Good must submit heartily to the Higher Powers, tho' unjust.*

(a) Rom. 13. 5.

Chap. IX. outward things; pay it them, I say, and the Officers and Ministers of their unjust and Violent Orders.

IV. *It is not permitted Subjects to kill a Tyrant.* IV. It is a most wicked Doctrine to teach, (as some States-Men do) that Subjects may lawfully kill a Tyrant. The Good and Bad too ought to pay respect to God's Direction, to his Executioner, and to the Servants of this Executioner, I mean to Tyrants and their Officers. It is God's Business to interpose here, and not that of the Subjects. And when God is pleased so to do, seeing the Beast grow too cruel, and that he would devour and swallow down all before him, he sets him Bars, and lets loose another cruel Beast to devour the first; and so successively, from Beast to Beast, one Beast devours another; and likewise according as God is pleased differently to place the Obstacles and Bars which he more or less sets in their way, one Beast is sometimes divided into many that from time to time eat up one another, as is divinely shewn in the Prophet *Daniel*. And thus shall it be till towards the end of the wicked World, when it should seem, that, one of these cruel Beasts, a Whelp of some Mighty One, shall arise and devour not only all other Beasts that shall be exposed to him as a Prey, but even the Good and Goodness it self, and shall set up the Devil and all manner of Wickedness even in the Temple and Worship of God himself, who shall then come and destroy this wild and enraged Beast by the Brightness of his Glorious Appearance; after this there shall be no more Beasts, but (a) *All the Kingdoms of the Earth shall become the Kingdom of God and of his Christ, who shall reign for ever and ever.* All this is set down, and that with particular Circumstances, in *Daniel* and the *Apocalypse*. Happy is he to whom the Holy Ghost shall give the lively and clear Understanding of this in its Season: I say the Holy Ghost, for it is in vain for Men to crack their Brains in commenting on these things before the time.

V. *Kingdoms and States are authorised of God, and one may preside in 'em in his Fear.*

V. The other thing which I said was to be observed is this, that we must not only distinguish between the Foundation of Monarchies and their present State, but likewise that we are not to confound that of God. as it was among the Israelites, with those of the World. Though the Foundation and Enlargement of the Monarchies of the World be nothing at all but Injustice,

justice, and the Title of Conqueror *be* but a hellish Chap. IX. Quality and incomparable with that of a Child of God, yet when a State is either already settled by Descent or Invasion, God, to maintain things in as good Order as may be, and to avoid new and continual Confusions, permits and allows him that has the Government to continue in it, and invests him with Wisdom and Authority to issue out Orders and to see them obeyed. And when such a Kingdom or State is become Hereditary and Successive, those on whom it is devolv'd, and those that administer the Government in it, may innocently do it in the Fear of God, and may become and continue his Children, provided that in their Interiour and as to what concerns God and their own Souls they practise such things as have been explained in their proper place; and as to the Exterior, that they understand, that their Duty is to be God's Instruments which he makes use of to curb the Wicked, for fear they should swallow up the Good. I could enlarge upon this Subject, and shew the Plan of the whole System of it: but it would be a plain Digression from my Design. If therefore one or two Remarks that I have already made upon two or three Articles of it, as I went along be not enough I will add as many more.

VI. I may be here told, that to speak of Powers as I have, is to speak too disadvantageously of them; that one I have a great Esteem for (a), and that has solidly handled this Subject, has referr'd the Rise of Government to Vertue, and the Support of it to the Donation of a Princely and double Portion of the Spirit which God gives to some for the governing of others. I answer, That I speak not of the Power it self, and much less of what Men might have done either out of Love to God, or from the most regular Instincts and Dictates of Nature, in setting up the wisest amongst them and those that were fittest to rule the rest. No doubt but God's Blessing and Favour accompanies such Establishments. But what I have said is with respect to such, who being at first invested with a moderate and limited Power, did afterwards abuse it; and by usurping an unlimited Greatness and Force, which had no other Rule of Action but their Appetites and Will, gave Birth to these great and cruel wild Beasts, such as were the four cele-

VI. *What I have said was more particularly with respect to immoderate and conquering States.*

(a) *Mrs. Bourignon, in a Treatise of hers against the Quakers.*

Chap. IX. brated Monarchies, which instead of being well-order'd Bodies of Sheep and Lambs, were nothing but furious Lions, enraged Bears, Leopards and Tygers, and such like ravenous and murdering Beasts, as may be seen in *Daniel*.

VII. *The
Vain Founda-
tion of
Politicks
laid down
by many.*

VII. I have oftentimes admired the Ignorance and Ridiculousness of most of those that go about to give Systems of Polity, and to explain the Source and Nature of the States and Empires of the World. They did not so much as know the Bottom of what they were to treat of, nor the End it aimed at, nor what Form was to be given it. Some have gone upon a Supposition that all Men were by Nature good, or at least that it was the End of Political Establishments to make 'em so; and thus they build us in the Air a *Plato's* Republick, that is of no Use but in a World of Romances. Others, as *Hobbes*, do in Effect suppose, though they do not expressly tell you so, that all Men are wicked, and then take this Wickedness for the Ground and Principle of natural Right and Justice; and then upon this Principle of I know not what chymical Right, they fall a telling us strange Stories, that Fear first united Men and call'd 'em together to quit this same cursed Right and make it over to some one Person, who being invested with it, becomes, as he shall fancy, the Rule of Just and Unjust; so that whoever shall from this time pay Obedience to the fantastical Laws of this pretended Oracle, is truly just and pleasing to God, &c. which is all meer Satanical Dotage.

VIII. *These
Powers are
not ordain-
ed to settle
Religion
by their
Strength.*

VIII. Others lay this down, That Secular Powers were establish'd to promote the Kingdom of God, to be the Guardians, as they say, of the Two Tables, to make Men serve God, and to reduce 'em to Obedience to him: which are very dangerous Principles. and proper to make Men Oppressors of Conscience, Sacrilegious and Hypocrites. There might indeed be some colour for this were we under a Theocratical Government, such as was that of the Jews in the Times of *Moses* and the Judges, where all was done from the Mouth of the Lord, who did not extend the Right of outward Power but to outward Matters, and to a Worship that was undoubtedly of his own establishing. But since he has himself abolished these Institutions, and

now

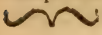
now requires only that his Servants worship him *in Spirit and in Truth*, and has left both this and all Externals to Man's own Choice, in States purely Civil and Worldly, where the Will of Flesh and Blood, and the Will of Man, and even the Will of the Devil himself is most commonly taken for the Will of God; in these, I say, to go to extend humane Right and Power to what concerns Man in Relation to God and eternal Salvation, is a plain Disorder, Encroachment, and Usurpation, and High Treason against the Majesty of God.

Chap. IX.
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IX. Man, who was created in an Angelical State, is by the Fall become as corrupt and as incapable of doing good of himself as the very Devil. This Diabolical Matter, corrupted within and without, is that which God is pleased to take again into his Hands, to see if he may yet make it an Angel, not by means of all the Powers of all Mankind, that can do no more here than the Powers of the Devils can; but by his Light, his internal Motions, by his Love, by Faith Divine, and by all Kinds of Spiritual Operations, joined with the Co-operation of Man's Liberty.

IX. The Difference between God's Spiritual, the Church's Ministerial, and the Magistrate's Civil Power.

This is what the Nature, the Subject Matter, and the Form of GOD's KINGDOM consists in; It is a bright and benign Will and Power that gently insinuates into a piece of Diabolical Matter, which freely resigning up it self to God, does by his Operations upon it at last become Angelical. When God is pleased to make use of any exteriour Means to this Purpose, 'tis by sending some to speak to Men and instruct them, and by Prayers, Exhortations and Remonstrances to beseech them to silence the Diabolical Corruption of their Hearts, and to hearken to and receive the Voice and Operations of God within them. The Ministerial Power of the Church, is a State that for its Subject, Nature, Matter and Form ought to consist of Persons moved of God, entreating corrupt Men with all Mildness to give Ear to God in their Interiour, and to desire the Descent of his Grace into their Diabolical Hearts, that by it they may be changed. Such as freely correspond to these two States (the Divine and Spiritual, and the Ministerial) and submit themselves to them, these become Subjects and Children of God, and re-en-

Chap. IX.  ter into their Angelical State : but such as correspond not to them, abide still in their Corruption and Diabolical State, and yet during this Life God waits for their Repentance, and leaves some good Men amongst them to assist them in it. And that they may not destroy the Good, nor take away one anothers Lives and Quiet by the Overflowings of their Corruption, God, to prevent their losing the only Opportunity of their Amendment, has erected humane Powers after such a manner as was said before.

X. *The Nature and Duty of Powers.*

X. And thus, the Subject wherein Worldly Power resides, its Nature, and the Matter it is concerned about and the Form it is to introduce into it, are contained in this Proposition ; *That Humane Powers are Persons of the World who by a Principle of Force and Constraint are to watch over corrupt Men, not by their Force to change them or make them inwardly good and vertuous, but lest the Diabolical Corruption of their Heart should so break out as to disturb and destroy the Good, or take away from the Wicked that Life and Quiet, which they may yet, if they will, employ in working out their Salvation.*

XI. *The Duty of Powers with respect to Mens Spiritual State.*

XI. I do not deny but Magistrates may be Holy Persons, nor do I say it is not their Duty to endeavour to make Men Vertuous ; but as Magistrates they need not be the one, nor as such will they effect the other. All Force and outward Constraint must here be laid aside, and nothing be done but by Remonstrances and Exhortations, leaving every one free to be Vertuous or Wicked, provided they give no Disturbance to any one. Considering the present State of the World, a Magistrate ought to be very well satisfied when his Subjects live orderly and quietly, and that they do no wrong, though as to what concerns God and themselves they be never so wicked, erroneous and corrupt. The most he can of right do, is, to quit his Government of them, or let them alone, or rather to procure them unquestionably good Means of Salvation, and leave every one to his Choice whether they will make use of them or not, to remain still Children of the Devil or become Children of God as they please; this not directly affecting the State : on the contrary, should all become Children of God, this would be the Destruction and End of all States : not that the Good



Good would ever fail in paying Subjection and Obedience to their Sovereigns; but the Sovereigns themselves and all the World being become Holy, they would freely with all Humility of Heart submit themselves to every one, or rather all would be subject to *Jefus Christ*, who would then be a most Glorious and Wonderful Monarch, making all his Subjects so many Kings and Princes. But this belongs to the Transactions of the other World. In this, Magistrates ought to preserve their Right over Men, and keep them in Order as wicked as they are; for indeed the wicked only are the Object and Matter of Civil Government: The Good are concerned in it only by Accident and as Strangers; and were there none but good Men, so far would they be from lording and compelling, that every one, as was said, would be disputing Subjection with his Brother, to which humble and hearty Contest God would by his Divine Love give Regulations and an happy End. But among the Wicked we must take other Measures.

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XII. When I speak of wicked Men continuing such with all their Accomplishments that fit them for Society, I mean it of a real Wickedness, by which they are so in God's sight, and not of a Civil Wickedness. There is a vast Difference between true Vices and Civil ones, between *true* Goodness and *Vertue*, and between *Vertue* and Goodness purely *Civil*: and this ought to be exactly distinguished, lest otherwise we should fall into Pharisaism, and into that fatal Blindness of Spirit that has almost overspread the World. In a well ordered Society Men ought to be Vertuous, Honest, Just, and Chaste, and many really are so, without having the least Grain of Vertue, Honesty, Justice or Chastity, in God's Eyes, who searches the Heart, and Centre of the Soul, before whom we become not Just and Vertuous but by the rough way of *Purification* before noted (a).

XII. The Difference between true Vertue and Civil, between true Vices and Vices against Civil Society.

In the Civil or Political Sense we cannot without wronging them call a great many Men Wicked, nor deny them to be Men of Probity and Honour: but in the Divine, God knows, and all whose Eyes God has opened know too, that were these Good and Honest Men but to have a View of themselves in the Light Divine, they would see themselves with all their

(a) Occ. Co-oper. Chap. 5, 6.

Chap. IX. Probity nothing but abominable Sinks of all the Filth of Hell. And this is true of every one that is not regenerate, however trimmily his old *Adam* may be dressed and adorned as to Civil Society, which concerns not it self with inward Corruption though never so Devilish. He may be as great a Villain and profligate a Wretch as he will, and yet go for an honest Gentleman, if his Wickedness has no ill Aspect upon the Civil Interests of others: this makes one Civilly vertuous, but really and in Divinity, a Child of the Devil and of Hell; but with this Difference between other extravagantly loose Fellows and these that can for Humane and Civil Respects keep under their Passions, that these are better disposed to hear, if they will, the good Spirit of God in their Interiour when he calls them: who if they listen to him will teach them a Vertue, Justice, Chastity and Honesty, and indeed a whole System of Morality of quite a different Strain and Genius from what the Polity of the World ever yet taught.

XIII. In  
all Affairs  
and Revolu-  
tions re-  
gard must  
be had espe-  
cially to the  
Direction  
of God.

XIII. But to return to the Revolutions that happen in States, I think I have said enough to shew how in their Beginnings, in their Duration, in their Changes and in their End, they are under the just and universal Providence of God, to which principally, and almost solely we should have regard in all sorts of Affairs and Revolutions: Not but that Humane and Politick Prudence and Firmness, the Malice, Artifice and Counsels of Men have their Share in them; but they are no further concern'd than God is pleased to let loose the Reins, or to curb them more or less by Obstacles laid in their way. And hence it is that some are stout and others stupid, some daring and others heavy and drowsy, some successful and others unhappy in all they undertake. *The Princes of Zoan are become Fools, the Princes of Noph are deceived, they have also seduced Egypt, even they that are the stay of the Tribes thereof.* And how comes this? *The Lord hath mingled a perverse Spirit in the midst thereof, and they have caused Egypt to err in every work thereof as a drunken Man staggereth in his Vomit.* This is what the Politicians ought to observe, who fancy they can penetrate and unfold every thing, that they can undertake and execute every thing by their own Strength,

Isa. 19.  
13, 14.

Strength, Application and Foresight, not thinking of Chap. IX.  
 this Saying of God which is address'd to them, *For it is a Day of Trouble, and of treading down, and of Perplexity by the Lord God of Hosts in the Valley of Vision, (Jerusalem, corrupt Christianity and the States thereof,) breaking down the Walls, and of crying to the Mountains.--- And ye have seen also the Breaches of the City of David, that they are many, and have gathered together the Waters of the lower Pool: and ye have numbered the Houses of JERUSALEM, and the Houses have ye broken down to fortifie the Wall. Ye made also a Ditch between the two Walls, for the Water of the old Pool, But ye have not looked unto the Maker thereof, nor had respect unto him that fashioned it long ago. And in that Day did the Lord God of Hosts call to weeping and to mourning, and to Baldness, and to girding with Sackcloth; and behold Joy and Gladness, slaying Oxen and killing Sheep, eating Flesh and drinking Wine; let us eat and drink, for to morrow we shall die. (We shall not live always. nor shall we still have Opportunities to take our Pleasure; e'en let us take it now while we may, and while all things are at our Command and Disposal.) And it was reveal'd in mine Ears by the Lord of Hosts, Surely this Iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die, saith the Lord God of Hosts.*

*Isa. 22. 5, 9, &c.*

## CHAP. X.

*Of the Truth and Certainty of Divine Predictions and Prophecies, and of their Accomplishment.*

I.  L L that I have hitherto been treating of may serve to explain as fundamentally and as fully as is requisite, this considerable Difficulty which was proposed in the very first Treatise, and though upon several Occasions presented to us, was still put off till now; I mean the Difficulty touching Divine Prophecies and Predictions

I. *The things preceding serve to reconcile Liberty and Predictions.*

which



Chap. X. which seemed incompatible with what we had said concerning Man's Liberty in the Government of himself : for such Liberty seems to destroy the Certainty of an antecedent and foretold Determination ; and reciprocally, the Certainty of a Prediction seems to take away the Liberty of Indifference, which is the only true Liberty.

II. *Objection. Tho' God puts Obstacles to the Eruption of the Malice of wicked Men, yet are they for all that free.*

II. But perhaps it will be objected that even what I said but just now concerning the Manner how God bridles the Malignity of the Wicked, and concerning the Obstacles he opposes to its breaking forth, seems to take away from them, or to tie and constrain their Liberty. I answer, that in my Opinion, did we but well understand wherein Liberty consists and wherein it does not, that it does not consist in a Power of applying one's self to all sorts of Objects. but in a Power of varying the Acts of one's Faculties about Objects when present, and not of extending them to Objects that are absent, we should at the same time understand also that the Liberty of the Wicked is always preserved entire, though God hinder such and such things from presenting themselves to them.

And indeed, what Difficulty is there to comprehend, that Man, who since his Fall has nothing in him but Darkness and Evil, nor any thing else without him, could not but be inclined to Evil, though he were free to vary these his Inclinations after a thousand different Manners? That, God having after all this, presented him by his Grace, as well inwardly as outwardly, his Light and his Good, he was then free to encline himself either to Good or to Evil, and to do it a hundred and a hundred different ways : but, that supposing he would chuse Evil and would stick to his Choice, in this case, he should be then determined and actually not free for the present, and indeed habitually determined for the future ; and so not free morally, though absolutely speaking he may change if he will : but howe'er this be, and however determined he be to Ill, this is, first an Effect of Liberty ; and in the second place, he can even in the Evil he has chosen diversifie his Desires a thousand various ways at pleasure. Now though God hinder the outward Eruption, or the external Effects of his Desires, yet is not the inward Liberty which

which he has, to will this or that, to desire passionately if he pleases this or t'other thing, taken from him. Chap. X. The Devil whom God chains up to prevent the outward Effects of his Desires, is not for all that the less free to will and desire inwardly whatever he pleases, God no way concerning himself with the inward Regulation of his Thoughts and Motions; but he either covers or removes the outward Objects which this Enemy would pour out his Rage upon, or else, leaves them open and exposed to him so far as the Wisdom and Justice of his ever to be adored Providence judges convenient.

III. We must not confound the *inward Liberty* of the Mind to dispose of its Faculties, with the *outward Acts* about all sorts of Objects at Discretion. God touches not the first in wicked Men, but the other he orders; not by decreeing that the Liberty of such and such shall be carried to such Acts so circumstantiated, but by leaving certain Objects naked on such and such sides, and likewise certain Roads and Ways to come at them; upon which, the Devil and wicked Men, who are constantly seeking where to pour in the Torrent of their Corruption, never fail to steer the Course of it thither.

In this very bursting out of their Malice they have a thousand Occasions of acting with Liberty: for in one and the same thing, in a Circumstance and Action that is still the same in Substance, there are a thousand things that are merely incidental, a thousand other Actions and Circumstances not necessary and indifferent, in which there is still left room for Liberty. For Example; supposing *Pharaoh's* Pursuit of the *Israelites* through the Red Sea was as to the Substance of it limited and circumstantiated by God just as has been said, yet still would there be a thousand things purely accessory, wherein *Pharaoh* might use his Liberty as he pleased: as were the Thoughts of his Mind, their Order or Disorder, the Posture and Motions of his Body, his marching with such or such an Equipage, the marshalling and ordering of his Forces and his Guards as he fancied himself, and a thousand other Particulars, which it were ridiculous to imagine were limited by Divine Decrees, or indeed by any particular Sight God had of them.

III. Notwithstanding the Barriers God sets against the Exterieur of wicked Men, they are still internally free, and indeed externally too.

Chap. X. We must moreover remember the Difference there is between the free Actions of wicked Men and those of the Devil: 'tis this, that wicked Men as long as they are in this World may, if they will, (as absolutely speaking they may by the Grace of God which is always offered them) they may, I say, by their Liberty turn from Evil and give themselves to what is Good. But in this Case, for one wicked Man that would not be any longer an Instrument of Wrath to execute some Evil or other, a thousand others would readily offer themselves. For neither God nor the Devil will ever want Instruments to work with; and whatever happens, God's true and substantial Purposes shall never miscarry. Which will be more clearly seen when I shall have spoken of the Divine Prophecies and Predictions.

IV. Before the Fall the Predictions concerning the substantial Design and Works of God were absolute and infallible: But what was accessory could not be so foretold.

IV. To speak with good Grounds concerning the Certainty of Things foretold 'tis necessary to observe first the Nature of them. Though every thing that is not God himself be accessory to him, yet among these accessory Things considered in themselves there are some that are *essential to God's Design*, and others that are *accidental or incidental* only. As God wills absolutely the doing such Things as are Essential to his Design, so he may foretel them because he absolutely wills the doing of them: but as those that are accidental to it do more or less require the Intervention of Man's Liberty, and so their coming to pass is not of absolute Certainty, but only of a moral and conditional one; so likewise are the Predictions and Prophecies concerning them. To give Examples of this.

To delight himself in Body, Soul and Divinity with Men upon the Earth in Glory, is the *Essential* of God's Design: this shall absolutely be done; and God will by his Power cut off all that opposes this Design of his. Hence God has foretold and prophesied absolutely in all the Prophets, that he will come and reign in Glory with Men on the Earth. This Prophecy and Prediction is of all, without exception, the most essential, the most absolute, and the most certain.

It is accidental to the Design of God, and to the essential Completion of it, that Sin should happen, and that Man should oppose God. It was possible and easy



easy and more pleasing to God that the essential of his Design and Work should have been accomplish'd without the Intervention of Sin rather than by it. Granting this, (upon Supposition too that God had already the Idea of Sin by the Fall of the Angels), this Event cou'd not be absolutely foretold before Man's Fall; it being a thing neither absolute, nor necessary, nor essential to God's Design or Work; but on the contrary, as was observed, God wou'd without this accessory Event of Sin, have attained the Accomplishment of his essential Work much sooner, and easier, and in a way much more pleasing to himself. Therefore did not God before the Fall foretel to *Adam* his Sin and his Punishment but only conditionally; nor indeed was the Certainty of it any more than conditional.

V. But after the happening of this Incident of Sin, God going on with the essential of his first Purpose, and constantly confirming the Certainty of it, did moreover make use of two kinds of middle Works, or Means to remove the Obstacles that were accidentally laid in the way to his principal Design. The first of these Works is in Scripture called (a) *The Work of God*, as being his own proper Work; and it consists in his offering Divine Lights and Motions to Man, and also outward Means to drive sin from his Heart. Upon this, God's principal Design is in a fair way of being fulfill'd. The other Work of God is in Scripture called (b) *his strange Work*, and *his strange Act*, to which he is not us'd; and it consists in this; that when a Person or Nation, or the World in general, will not resign their Liberty to God and let him bring forth in 'em his Light and Divine Motions, nor leave off sinning, he then cuts them off from the Earth, which he afterwards purifies, and comes thither with the good part of Mankind to accomplish his principal Design; which he has so certainly foretold as to assure us, that it should be by this that Men shou'd acknowledge him to be the True God, and shou'd in times to come glorifie him by swearing (c) by *The God of Truth*.

Chap. X.



V. After Sin the Essential of God's Design still remaining, the Obstacles to it may be remov'd by two sorts of Ways or Works.

(a) Jo. 6. 29. and Chap. 11. 4, 5.

(b) Isa. 28. 21.

(c) Isa. 65. 16.

VI. Now

VI. *Tho' it be a thing of no Importance to God how his purpose be accomplish'd, yet does he chuse the way of his Work of Love.*

VI. Now 'tis observable, That it is a Thing of no Moment as to God himself, by what way he compasses his first Design, whether directly, without the accessory Event of Sin, or Sin happening ; by the way of his proper Work, or of his strange Work. It is a horrible Fallacy to think that either God or his Glory needed the Intervention of Sin, or that this Divine Glory requir'd the Way of God's strange Work rather than of his proper Work. On the contrary, God wish'd only the Way of Uprightness and Holyness, and abhorr'd the Way of Sin, which he endeavour'd to prevent by doing whatever was feasible on his part. And after Sin happen'd, he does and always will endeavour to attain his main End by the means of his proper Work, without the Intervention of his strange Work.

VII. *Predictions of Good and Evil: how God stands affected towards 'em.*

VII. And therefore it is that in Scripture he proclaims and foretels Good after such a manner as plainly shews he wishes all Creatures, even the most wicked, Babylon the Harlot and her Daughters and Inhabitants would comply with, and be healed by his Work of Love: and that when he denounces and foretels Evil, whether particular or universal, he gives evident Tokens of his Displeasure at it, that he wishes it might not be so, and seriously invites the generality of the Wicked to avoid it, being always most ready to spare them; that being as possible (a) and as pleasing to God, and in it self indifferent; not to say that it more directly contributes to the accomplishment of his main Design.

(a) See Chap. 4. § 9.

VIII. *These Predictions are not of absolute and physical Certainty.*

VIII. Now since Men are free either to admit or not to admit the Operations of God, and to give place either to his proper or his strange Work; the Predictions concerning these things are not of absolute, physical and infallible Certainty, because absolutely speaking these things may go otherwise, and God for his part wishes they may do so.

IX. *Different Degrees of Certainty in Predictions.*

IX. What then is the degree of Certainty of these Predictions, and whence have they it? There are several sorts of it.

*The First.*

1. *First,* The things God will absolutely do himself may be foretold with an entire Certainty: such as are the Offer of the Lights of God and of his Graces both inward and outward, the Calling the Gentiles and all Nations, and the like.

2. *Secondly,*

2. *Secondly*, Particular Persons being free, it cannot *The Second.* be foretold as a thing absolute and of necessary Futurition, and physically infallible, who they are that will and will not correspond. And so all the Predictions and Prophecies of this kind, the Promises and Threats of future Good and Ill, supposing Man's Correspondence, which is free, are, properly speaking, conditional; though proposed never so absolutely, whether touching good things which God gives upon Correspondence, or Evils which he threatens. It is the part of Man's Liberty to make himself at his Choice the Object or Subject of these Goods or Evils, and to gratifie God, who rather wishes the Good than the Ill.

Yet because God knows the Thoughts and Inclinations of Man, the Strength of his Habits, Satan's Methods of acting and tempting, the physical Influences of the Heavens and Elements upon Man, the Impression all this makes upon our Souls, how the corrupt Soul follows the Tide of its Passions, Inclination, and Temper, in a word, the Impressions of Nature and of Flesh and Blood; all this, together with the Knowledge God likewise has, as far as he pleases, of the Obstacles he will put in the way, and of the different Course he will give the breaking out of Man's Corruption and its Acts, this I say enables him to foresee and foretell, when he pleases so to do, what will come to pass with as great Certainty, as it may be foretold, that one who is habituated to such a Vertue or Vice, and going into a place where he will meet with Objects that will awaken his Habits, will exert Acts that are proper to them.

X. This last kind of Certainty, though not absolute, *X. How* is yet so great that it comes very short of that which is *great the* conversant about Events of absolute necessity. And indeed, is it not certain, or within a very little, that a *moral Cer-* Drunkard and Glutton almost choaked and starved, *tainty of* coming where all sorts of Provisions are at his service, *Predictions* will as certainly cram and make himself drunk, as if *is.* he did it only by Mechanism and Necessity without the least Degree of Liberty. Yet it is still true, that absolutely speaking, he might by using his Liberty do otherwise: but how seldom does this happen; Can one find one in ten thousand that does it? For He must use



Chap. X. use a great Denial of himself and his corrupt Appetites, and he must offer to himself mighty Violence, before he can do it; and this makes the Case so rare and so difficult, but yet is it not impossible.

Hence it is that notwithstanding all the moral Certainty of these Predictions, yet those of Evil may not come to pass, would Men but do their Duty in denying themselves, as God desires and commands they should; and those of Good may not be fulfilled to them, unless Men answer the Conditions on which they were tacitly founded; and still in this case, God would make them good towards some others.

XI. *The Predictions of Good cannot but be fulfilled, those of Evil may not.*

XI. For there is yet this difference between good and ill Predictions; the good if we consider them in themselves shall assuredly have their Completion; for though some particular Persons to whom they were addressed may deprive themselves of the Benefit of them by not observing the Terms they were given upon; yet will God ratify them towards others that shall submit to the Conditions: whereas Predictions concerning Evil may absolutely have no outward and formal Event, would but all correspond to God's Calls, who would not need to look out, or raise up others to accomplish upon them the Predictions of Evil. He would be very well pleased could he find none such.

XII. *There have been Divine Predictions without their Event*

XII. Upon this it may after all be asked, *first*, Whether there ever were such Predictions as were not accomplished. And *secondly*, If upon supposition the Event of such as concern Evil never did, nor never were to happen, this would not destroy, I do not say the Truth of Predictions (for I have already (a) answered this) but the Designs of God upon Men? I answer the first Question by the Examples of Scripture it self, wherein we see Prophecies and Predictions of God, as well in matter of Good as of Evil, whereof the Event never happen'd to those Persons to whom it was declar'd. See what God himself says to *Eli* (b), *I said indeed* (and that is resolvedly enough to foretel a thing) *that thy House and the House of thy Father should walk before me for ever. But now the Lord saith, be it far from me, for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed: behold the day cometh that I will cut off thine arm, &c.*

(a) Supr.  
Chap. 4.  
§ 7.

(b) 1 Sam.  
2. 30.

As for Predictions concerning Evil, there is the famous Prophecy of God against the *Ninevites*, that was denounced absolutely, (c) *Yet forty days and Nineveh shall be destroyed*: which yet did not so come to pass. Chap. X. (c) *Jonah* 3. 4.

There is a formal Prediction which God expressly sent to King *Ezekiab* by the Mouth of the Prophet *Isaiab*, whom he commanded to tell him from him, that he was sick unto Death, (d) *Thus saith the Lord, set thine house in order for thou shalt die and not live*. And yet this through the Prayers of that pious King came not to pass. (d) *Isa.* 38. 1.

XIII. It would be superfluous to alledge other Examples. These shew the Truth I am establishing evidently enough to such as are teachable: but as for the indocile, who will understand nothing but what they have already got in their Head and are resolved there to keep it, all the Examples in the World, all the Declarations and the very Oaths of God himself cannot satisfy them. *XIII. Nothing will satisfy unteachable Men, nor open their Eyes.* If the same God, who has sometime sworn that *he would not the death of Sinners*, even after he had foretold it them, and who assures them that this Prediction may not come to pass, and that that is what he desires, should now come and swear in the most express Manner possible, that the Doctrine of a Predestination determinate, infallible and immutable as to particular Persons and Events, were a false Doctrine; and that Men notwithstanding any Prediction concerning their Life or their Death, have the Liberty by the Grace of God to save themselves, or through their own fault to damn themselves, and that none of these Predictions is of infallible Event; such strongly prepossess'd Persons would not believe a word of it. They would look out Distinctions to wrest the Words of God were they never so plain, and make him say, white is black: and such they would easily find out; for nothing is more easie than for a Heart, that is dark and loves its Errours, to deceive it self, especially since Art has been added to corrupt Nature, and that for fear they should want Means to deceive themselves; Men seem for no other end to have encouraged Study in all Parties but to get Belief to their Doctrines, and to disguise the Errors they are resolved to embrace under the Mask and Appearance of Truth. I think I have (a) somewhere prevented (a) *Supr: Ch. 4. § 12.*



Chap. X. prevented the Cavils some might raise here, upon the Difference between Divine Predictions, and Promises and Threatnings: and so shall pass on to the second Difficulty.

XIV. *Tho' none of the Predictions of Evil ever had or ever should come to pass, yet would it not derogate at all from the Completion of God's Purpose.*  
(b) Supr. Ch. 4. § 3.

XIV. Supposing the Divine Predictions, for Example, those concerning Evil (for they fall most under our present Consideration) should not come to pass, would not God's Truth be thereby impeach'd, and would not the Construction and Oeconomy of his Designs thereby be travers'd and defeated? I answer, that the very contrary to this would have happened: and I think I have above (b) shewn, how if the Evil foretold had never come to pass, the Predictions would then have attain'd their true End and their most perfect Accomplishment, and that then God's Design had been compleated the noblest and shortest Way. And this is made more intelligible from what has been said of God's main and substantial Design, and of his proper, and his strange Work.

XV. *Sin is not necessary to the fulfilling of God's Purpose.*

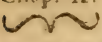
XV. Men have foolishly and unhappily conceited that it was an essential part of God's Design to have it brought about by such ways wherein Sin and Corruption should have their parts, and that without these oblique ways God's Design would miscarry. All perfect Mistake this! God has infinite ways to come to the Ratification of his Purposes, and none of these ways require Sin, but Purity only. Nevertheless Man having opened this unhappy and strange way, God, to finish his Design is pleased to endeavour his Recovery by his proper and Divine Work; but as, when Sinners are resolved to pursue obstinately their own Courses, God is pleased to restrain them, he is also pleased to forestall their Evils, but so and with Design; that if Men do their best, these Evils shall not befall them. If they do not befall them, then God's solid and main Design always standing firm, God would accomplish it by a hundred other ways of Purity; and so only the oblique way of his strange Work would thereby become impracticable: which would be so far from displeasing God that it would be his and his Angels Joy, and would give him an Opportunity of accomplishing his grand and only essential Design much sooner and more agreeably, and in a more directly glorious and happy Manner



Manner than otherwise. I will explain this by some Chap. X.  
 Examples considered hypothetically. ~

XVI. The Prophets had foretold that *Jesus Christ* XVI. An  
 should be rejected and put to Death by the Jewish Na- Example  
 tion. No doubt the Rejection and Crucifixion of the with rela-  
 Son of God were great Sins in those that were guilty of tion to the  
 them, and consequently, there is no Question but God Evils that  
 did most seriously and heartily desire that neither the were com-  
 Jews, nor any other Persons should commit this Sin, mitted in  
 and that it was for this End that he caused so many putting Je-  
 Truths to be Preached to them, and did them so much sus Christ  
 good by his Son, whom he sent to them expressly and di- to Death.  
 rectly to soften them, and to make them bring forth and  
 render to him the Fruits of Righteousness and not to give  
 them occasion to kill him; as appears as clear as the  
 Day by the Parable (a) of the Servants sent into the Vine- (a) Mat.  
 yard to gather the Fruits of it, and at last of his well be- 21. 33.  
 loved Son, whom the Father of the Family sent likewise  
 on the same Errand, with Intention and Desire that they  
 shou'd reverence his Son: *It may be, says he, when they*  
*see him, they will reverence him.* But when God had,  
 upon his Resolution of this Embassy, foreseen the wil-  
 ful Obstinacy and Rage of the Jews, and that neverthe-  
 less the Salvation of good Men required *Jesus Christ's*  
 Presence in the Flesh to draw them out of their Igno-  
 rance, then God consented it should be so though at the  
 Expence of his Son's Persecutions and Murther, and  
 upon Supposition of this wilful Obstinacy of the Jews,  
 he foretold their Crime particularly enough.

Let us suppose now, that, seeing absolutely speak-  
 ing, the Jews were free and might change; and that  
 the Certainty of this Prediction was not inconsistent  
 with their Change, suppose we, I say, that in effect  
 they had not rejected nor killed the Son of God; what  
 would the Consequence of this have been? *First*, God's  
 Design and his most direct Intention towards the Jews,  
 which was that they should be converted, and bring  
 forth Fruit and live and honour his Son, would have  
 been accomplished. *Secondly*, the Son of God and the  
 converted Jews would have been employed to call and  
 convert the dispersed Israelites, as well as the Heathen,  
 where they would have met with other Enemies, and  
 other wicked Men, who would either have been con-

Chap. X.  verted or not. If we suppose they wou'd not have been converted, then would *Jesus Christ* and his Followers be in a fair way to be persecuted and crucified according to the Tenour of the Prophecies; but if we suppose they would have been converted, then would God, according to his most earnest Desire and his most direct Intention, have compassed his End without the Intervention of his strange Work, and the great Crime which Men would otherwise have committed in killing his Son. The Essential of God's Design would then have been most perfectly accomplished without the Mediation of so many Sins so odious in God's Sight, and without the strange Operation of the Effusion of divine Wrath upon these Murderers and Rebels, and without the Damnation of so many Souls which God had created for Salvation, and which he wished them above all things. Yet for all this, would not *Jesus Christ* have been absolutely without his Cross and Sufferings, nor without an inward Death in the bottom of his Soul occasioned by the Sins committed against God from the Beginning of the World; and if any one had then desired an Interpretation of all those things that were prophesied of him, he might have found them all spiritually and mystically in him, in the Wicked, and in the Good.

(a) Oec.  
of the Re-  
stor. be-  
fore the  
Inc. Ch.  
15. § 9.

In this Case, will some say, the Redemption of Man might have been wrought without *Jesus Christ's* bodily Death. I have in another place (a) said what is necessary to satisfy this Difficulty.

XVII. A-  
nother Ex-  
ample, up-  
on a suppo-  
sition that  
Men being  
converted,  
the general  
Plagues  
fall not up-  
on 'em.

XVII A second hypothetical Example of what I assert may be this. Suppose we that the great Predictions of the Reign of Antichrist, of the Corruption and Extermination of the great Whore, and of beastly Christendom never come to pass, because Christians to escape the dreadful Punishments hanging over their Heads, and to please God, should become truly converted (for 'tis in this case alone that the Evils foretold may not come to pass, and without this their Event is as certain as any Truth in Mathematicks, as are generally all sorts of Predictions of Evil excepting in the case of Repentance): if therefore in such case, the Predictions concerning the great Whore and her Excision did not come to pass, what then? What Inconvenience wou'd

would it be if through so holy a Means they were not Chap. X.  
 ratified? Would God be deceived? No, for he fore-  
 saw that absolutely speaking it was possible these things  
 shou'd not happen, and that they wou'd not come to  
 pass but upon supposition of Man's Impenitence.  
 Would he have missed his Design? His direct Design  
 is only the Salvation, Sanctification and Glorification  
 of Men: the rest is only his foreign Work, not intend-  
 ed by him, and which he would willingly forbear. If  
*Babel* wou'd be converted, the Desire of God and Angels  
 wou'd be fulfilled, and God's principal Work, would  
 be in a fair Preparation of being speedily accomplished  
 by the directest way. The Destruction of *Babel* and  
 of all its Accomplices would be fulfilled in the Interi-  
 our: *Babel* wou'd be destroyed in the Souls of Men; its  
 Abominations, its Pumps, its Strength, Life and all  
 that belongs to it would be cut off by the Sword of  
 God's Word, and consumed in the Fire of his Love;  
 and that nor without Torment (though to Salvation)  
 in her true Purification, wherein all her Sins, Mon-  
 strousness, and Wounds wou'd be laid open.

XVIII. If it be said, these are but the Fooleries of XVIII.  
 some Mystick Divines; I answer, This Reproach is *The Answer*  
 but a piece of Impiety of wicked and ignorant Men. *to a scoff-*  
 The internal things of the Spirit are before God so *ing Re-*  
 much incomparably more real than external things, as *proach.*  
 can't be express'd. It is certain God makes more Ac-  
 count of the spiritual and mystical Death of one only  
 Soul, that is to say, of the extermination of the old  
*Adam*, and of Corruption out of it, than of the Death  
 and Excision of a thousand wicked Men, nay, than  
 of all the wicked Men in the World. If (a) *there* (a) Luke  
*be Joy in Heaven for one Sinner that repents*, there 15. 7, 10.  
 would be Abysses of inexpressible Joys if *Babel*  
 could be mystically and spiritually exterminated, with-  
 out needing to be stricken outwardly, and to be cast e-  
 ternally Body and Soul into the bottomless Pit. O how  
 pleasing would this be to God! But seeing she will not,  
 though God uses all Means possible to bring her to it,  
 he consents, upon her diabolical Obstinacy, that the  
 Works of her Hands shou'd fall upon her; which will  
 certainly sink her, except she return to God, as she  
 might if she wou'd. When all is done, God will finish



Chap. X. his capital Design, which can never miscarry, whatever Diversities and Differences, whatever Variations Men may occasion in his accessory Ways and Methods.

XIX. *The last Example taken from what befel the Jews.* XIX. The last Example is one that God himself helps us to. He had foretold to the *Israelites* that were in *Egypt*, that he wou'd bring them into the Land of *Canaan*: and *Jacob's* last Will is fill'd with Predictions of what should befall each Tribe. Nevertheless, in the Wilderness, God was just going to cut 'em all off but *Moses*: and had certainly done it but for his Intercession. What wou'd then have become of the Predictions, and of God's Purposes concerning the Jewish Nation? I answer, That God wou'd have executed 'em a hundred other ways; one of which he makes known (a) *Exod.* 32. 10. to *Moses* (a), *Let me alone, and my anger shall wax hot against 'em, and I will consume 'em; but I will make of thee a great Nation.*

XX. *There remains now, one would think, no more Difficulty in these Matters.* XX. I know not, after all these Truths, of any just Ground of Difficulty in this matter, unless it may be, some will say, that to understand things in this Manner necessarily supposes in God mutable and temporal Modes of thinking and conceiving, and such as are variable according to the Differences of times: to which Difficulty I know (if I may dare to speak with any Assurance) I know, I say, I have answered fundamentally in the first Treatise (b), which the Reader may consult if he pleases. Had God been pleased to remain in the Abyss of his own Eternity wherein there is no Duration nor Succession, he wou'd never have made any Creatures. nor have manifested himself to any: But being pleas'd to manifest himself to Creatures that are durable and their Acts successive, and being pleas'd also to correspond and Comport with them and their Acts, this does in the Nature of the thing imply in him the Will to suit the arbitrary and free Acts of his Good-pleasure to them, to their Duration and their Succession. This in my Opinion ought to satisfy, though I had not (c) before suggested, that *Jesus Christ*, God-Man being the Person presiding over Divine Providence, and the Execution of God's Designs, it is no wonder if in him there be succession and diversity of Thoughts.

(c) Chap. 5. n. 6. (b) Oecon. of the Creat. Ch. 13, 14, & 15.

XXI. I was tempted to set down here by way of Re-  
 capitulation of the preceding Matters, what is in the  
 Apologetick Preface to Mrs. *Bourignon's* Life from the  
 170th Page to the 175th, and to cite what the sublime  
*John of the Cross* says about Predictions and their E-  
 vents in the 19th and 20th Chapters of the Second Book  
 of his *Ascent to Mount Carmel*: But without transcribing  
 any thing, I chuse rather to content my self with the  
 bare Citation I make, and here to end the first of the  
 three things I designed to treat of in this Book, which  
 will be easily understood if we but well consider, that  
 nothing is necessary to God but himself, his Image, and  
 his Love; and that all things else are to him indifferent,  
 arbitrary and accessory: That he having been pleas'd  
 accessorily to frame Ideas and Things, his principal and  
 direct Aim in this his arbitrary Pleasure was to com-  
 municate to his free Creatures his Felicity, by and up-  
 on a faithful and holy Correspondence on their Parts;  
 that, Sin intervening merely by accident, and against  
 God's Intention, 'tis all one to God how Sin be re-  
 mov'd, and that it is more pleasing to him, and more  
 agreeable to his Desire, that it be taken away by the  
 Conversion rather than by the Destruction of the Sub-  
 ject it is in. And lastly, that, however it be, God  
 will be sure to attain what he arbitrarily design'd with  
 his Creatures, which Design of his nevertheless is no  
 way essential to him. This fundamental Scheme well  
 comprehended will take away the Difficulty of all the  
 rest.

## C H A P. XI.

*The Advantages and Proofs of this System of Grace, Providence and Liberty; and the insufferable Inconveniencies of other Systems.*

I. *The Connexion of what went before with what follows: Some Reflexions upon this System in reference to the Universality of Grace.*



I. **THINK** I have all along hitherto given a System of *Divine Providence* sufficiently compleat; and have shewn how it agrees with the *Universality of Grace*, whereof I have likewise shewn the Nature and Operations in the preceding Tracts. I once thought I shou'd do well to prove now designedly this *Universality*: but having done it already from many original and solid Heads in the foregoing Treatises as the divers Subjects there handled gave me Occasion, I shall confine my self to some short Reflexions upon this System of Providence and Grace, and beg the Reader to consider with me these Three or Four Things, which, if I mistake not, are enough to assure us of the Truth of any System.

*Five Proofs and Advantages of this System above others.*

1. The *First* is this, That all sorts of Considerations, Divine and Humane, all sorts of Testimonies, of God, Conscience, and Nature, lead us to our System.

2. The *Second*, That this System satisfies all the Attributes of God, and the whole Duty of Man.

3. The *Third*, That it is absolutely impossible to find any Way but this, to answer all these and a thousand more Difficulties.

4. The *Fourth*, That all other Systems are so far from satisfying Truth, that they are inexhaustible Sources of the grossest Falsities imaginable.

5. The *Fifth*, That our System has no Difficulty peculiarly belonging to it; and that none can be objected against it either from the Nature of things Divine or Humane, or from the Testimony of Scripture, to which it does not plainly and clearly give a satisfactory Answer, and which are not according to it very easie in themselves.



II. (i.) In effect, to run over each of these Considerations again, if it be remembered what was shewn in the first Treatise, we cannot but observe that all the Considerations of God's Nature, of his Purposes and Decrees, and of the Creation, do jointly tend to convince us, that God made all Men only to be eternally happy. I remit you to the Considerations that make the Twenty Eighth Chapter of that Treatise, and am sure one cannot after that reasonably question this Truth: for thence it appears that the Constitution of the Nature of every one of us and our Creation is not really distinct from the Destination of every one of us to supreme Happiness, and from the direct Way to the actual Attainment of it.

II. (i.)  
God, his  
Nature, his  
Designs, the  
Creation,  
all declare  
the Truth  
of this Sy-  
stem.

All (but *Spinoza* and some of his Atheistical Followers) are agreed that God made all things for some *End*; that he has given them a *Nature* and *Faculties*, by which they are carried towards, and do attain that *End*; which when they have attained, they are in a State of Acquiescence, of Joy and Rest, of Content and Happiness; for then they enjoy what they were made for. God is the *End* of all things, but especially of Man. But God is no dark, tormented Being, full of Rage, Sadness and Desolation; but he is Light, Peace, Joy, Love and Delight. Therefore the *End* of every Man's *Creation* is a bright, peaceful, joyous, delightful Life; in a Word, eternal Life is the *End* of every Man's *Creation*. And as for Man's *Nature* and *Faculties*, they principally consist in Sentiment or Life, in the Desire, the Understanding and Liberty: the Objects of Life or Sensibility, are what is pleasant; of the Desire, Good; of the Intellect, Truth; of the Liberty, an infinite and undetermined Reception and Enjoyment of Good: all which are God himself and Eternal Life: for the Pleasant, the Good, the Truth and the Infinity of Good is God himself. It is the same thing for God to will the Creation of, and actually to create a living and sensible, a desiring, intelligent and free Subject, as to will and actually to make a Subject whose Nature and End shall consist in its being carried to an infinite Sentiment, Knowledge and Love of God, that is to say, in being destinated to be happy, and that to all Eternity; since its End and its Faculties are of an immortal and eternal Nature,

Chap. XI. Nature. Therefore are all Men destined and created of God to be freely and eternally happy.

III. Other  
Proofs of  
the Truth  
of this Sy-  
stem.

III. Let us consider, that God could not draw himself other Ways, nor frame another Image of himself than as he is, bright, glorious, happy, and peaceable, and perfectly harmonious with himself. Let us ask our Conscience, and consult the Words and Conduct of God, even since the Fall, how he received Man into Favour again presently after his Sin; and how, lastly, this his Favour and Grace was extended to all his Descendants, he offered it to him when they were yet in him and the same thing with him, to the end that (according to St. Paul's way of reasoning) (a) the Root being received into Favour, the Branches might be so too; and the first Fruit being recalled to Life, the whole Lump might be so likewise. The Care and Effects of Providence towards all, the Offers of inward and natural Means to all; the Offer of extraordinary Means to some, by them to call the whole World; that every Man is with God's Assistance put in a Capacity of Salvation; the Consideration that this Life is in the Nature of it a Time of Deliberation and Trial whether we will chuse Life or Death; the Love, Dignity and Merit of the Mediator, which are infinite and above all Conception; that of his Power, greater to save than the first Man's was to damn us; lastly the Consideration of a thousand and a thousand Graces of Prevention and Correspondence which he has shed and continually does shed forth upon his Creatures, do nothing but lead us to this same Truth which is attested by all the Scriptures, and that by God's own Swearing and Oath, as well as all the Writings of such Holy Persons who have enjoyed the Light of God in its greatest Purity. And when God threatens, when he promises and foretels Good and Evil, and at the same time exhorts Men to qualify themselves to partake of the one, and to avoid the other, and even to prevent their falling out, this all leads us manifestly to the System we have been proposing of Providence, of the Provision of things to come, and of Man's Liberty.

(a) Rom.  
11. 16.



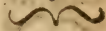
IV. (2.) But if there be any thing that demonstrates the Advantage of this our System, it is its perfectly satisfying all that God's Attributes and Man's Duty require. The *Power, Infinity, Independence and Communicability* of God, require, that in case he be pleas'd to communicate himself actually, that he create a Subject free and independent of every thing but it self in its Determination of it self; just as we have propos'd it. God's *Justice* requires the same; otherwise God wou'd not render to every one according to their Works, their Operations, and their respective Choices; but according to the pure and simple Measure of his own Will independently on Man. The *Wisdom* of God exacts that he make nothing but what is conformable to himself, to his Truth, his Holiness, his Love and Acquiescence; and therefore, that he make neither Nature, nor Faculties, nor Means, but to be conformable to himself, to his Truth, to his Love, Holiness and Blessedness. The *Holiness* of God is infinitely remote from Sin and from consenting to it, nor can we have a purer Conception of it, than by acknowledging that God has neither decreed, will'd, nor permitted Sin, and that he neither made nor so much as had any Idea of it before it actually happen'd; so far was he from willing the Damnation of some as a means to manifest his Justice, since Damnation includes Sin, which God wills not, and without which Hell and all the Torments of it wou'd be turn'd into infinite Delights. The *Charity* of God cannot suffer him to forsake Man tho' fallen, if he be but in a Capacity, thro' his Grace, to re-enter into Happiness. His *Impartiality, Equality, and Constancy* will not suffer him, if he goes on still with his Design of making 'em happy, to let it fall as to more than the half of Mankind, and that for Reasons ground'd on himself. He shou'd both appear and really be lovely in the Eyes of all Men, for as much as it is the Duty of all Men to love him; and all ought to find in considering him, Causes of Love, of Humility, of Comfort and Hope, and Encouragement to go on bravely with the Work of their Salvation, as well as of Fear and Trembling.

And



Chap. XI. And all this our System fully answers, which maintains that Grace is universal ; that it may be gain'd and lost ; that the Promises and Threatnings, the Good and Evil foretold may be escap'd or executed. If the Events come to pass, then 'tis Grace that does all, and our Liberty that admits its Operations ; if the Evils eventually happen, then it is because Man freely turns away from the Grace of God, who heartily wills the preventing of Man's Misery, but wou'd not force his Liberty.

V. (3.) V. (3.) 'Tis what well deserves our Notice, and is *This System opens the only way of coming out of all Difficulty.* the *third* Thing to be reflected on ; that there is absolutely nothing else that can satisfactorily answer what we have said concerning God's Designs, the Creation, his Divine Attributes, the Duty of Man, nor a thousand other Difficulties relating to these Matters, except that Way only which we have taken, which is to acknowledge God's Grace, its Universality and Man's Liberty either to receive or reject it, without being either way determin'd saving only by himself. If you deny but any one of these things you will be able to explain nothing at all of God's Designs, nor of his Dealings with Men ; you will be able to give no Account either of God's Attributes or of Man's Duty. All becomes immediately indissipable Darknes, as I may say. To deny God's Grace is Pelagian and Atheistical ; to deny its Universality and Man's Liberty, is to throw one's self into the midst of all the Darknes and Difficulties imaginable, whence we shall never get out with all our Efforts, except we own this Point, that the Goodness of God is universal, and that Man's Liberty is indetermin'd and indeterminable by any thing but Man himself. This last Article, against which the rigid Predestinarians stand most upon their Guard, is so indispensably necessary, that if we start never so little from it, all the old Difficulties return upon us in Shoals. If we in the least allow that God antecedently and infallibly determines Man's Liberty, all the Murmurs, Absurdities, and Falsties that follow from this Concession rally again and invincibly keep their Ground. Yet ought we not to be indifferent whether we leave them in the Minds of Men or no ; they being most of them so many Blasphemies against the Honour



of God: Why therefore will not Men yield to the Way we propose, it being the only one that can dissipate them, that being absolutely impossible any other way whatever?

VI. (4)

*All other Systems labour under indefensible Difficulties.*

VI. (4.) My *fourth* Consideration is this, that all other Systems are so far from answering Truth and all the Phenomena's of it, that they are the Sources of enormous Difficulties, and of Consequences plainly indefensible. I need not (to convince you of this more particularly than I have already upon divers Occasions in the preceding Tracts) examine here all sorts of Systems and Methods upon this Subject: we may satisfy our selves with the Consideration of three of them, with relation to the three Articles of ours, which are, *Divine Grace, its Universality, and undetermin'd Liberty.* Some Systems deny Grace, others the Universality of it; others Liberty; or at least something wherein it is concern'd.

*The Pelagian System.*

I will not insist upon the first, which is that of the Pelagians: I have sufficiently shew'd the Abominableness of that; and indeed it is a System more becoming Atheists than Christians.

*The different Systems of Particularists.*

As to their System who make the Grace of God particular, there being many sorts of them, or rather those of this Opinion taking divers Methods, some the Supralapsarian, others the Sublapsarian, or the common, or that of *Amynald.* I shall not stay long upon these Diversities, nor upon shewing, that after all, should one press the Sublapsarians with the Consideration of their Doctrine concerning the Decrees, the Determination and Action of God upon second Agents, and even upon our Liberty too, they must necessarily come over to Supralapsism. Nor will I look upon their System on its ugliest side: But will consider it only on that side which they shall not complain I have disguis'd, as owning it themselves; *viz.* That God did not create all Men to save them, and that it was his Will to redeem but some of the whole Race of Mankind fallen in Adam.

VII. *Difficulties in the System of Particularism*

VII. The first of these Positions is incompatible with the Nature of God's Decrees, Designs and Acts, with the Creation and the Nature of its End, with that of

*with respect to the Creation.*



Chap. XI. the intelligent Creature, of its Faculties and their Use. Were that true, God wou'd not have made himself the Scope and End of all Creatures. He wou'd have dislik'd himself as to his being the supreme and sole End, and wou'd have prefer'd the Absence of himself and his Image to their Presence; which surely none dare say. I might here add all the Considerations laid down in the Twenty Eighth Chapter of the Treatise of the Creation, which must all be false, if this Proposition be true, *viz.* That God did not create all Men to Salvation.

*The Absurdity of the Supralapsarian System. It implies a Contradiction.*

These Consequences are more especially strong and unavoidable with respect to the Supralapsarians, from whose Doctrine there follow yet other monstrous Absurdities; for were it true, that God's sub-ordinate End in Man's Creation, was to damn the greatest part of them, that so he might attain his chief and main End, the Manifestation of his Glory; he must therefore needs think it good (in quality of a Mean) and also will that Man shou'd reject, be ignorant of, hate and blaspheme God with infinite Rage and Torment: for Damnation is nothing but the utter Rejection of God, Darkness in the Understanding, Hatred in the Will, Blasphemy, Rage and Torments in the Affections and Sensibility of the Soul and Body. Now to will all this for one's Glory and Pleasure, is just what the Devil wills, who thus pretends to damn Men for his Glory and Pleasure. A Man cannot without Horror think of attributing such Abominations to God.

*It implies a Contradiction.*

I add, that to say God created Men for this End, that part of 'em might be damn'd for his Glory, implies a Contradiction: For Damnation is a State of Trouble and Disquiet: on the contrary, the Nature of Rest and Acquiescence consists in this, that it is the Result of a Subject when it attains the Means, the Ways and the End to which it was destin'd by its first Cause. Whence it follows that Souls destin'd to such Means, such Ways, and such an End, whatever they be, cannot be miserable when they have attain'd 'em; they being then in the Ways and in the Centre, God, they say, destin'd them to. Therefore is it a vain and contradictory Fancy, to hold that God created Souls for certain Means and for a certain End, and that these Souls, though



though they have attain'd their End, may yet be Rest- Chap. XI.  
less and in Torment.

VIII. The other Assertion of the Doctrine of Particularism, viz. that it was not God's Will to redeem all Men fallen, does not only not answer the Truth of God's ways, nor of his Attributes; but is indeed directly contrary to them. It accuses God of Inconstancy and Change, of a limited Goodness, of Self-Contradiction, of Cruelty, Partiality and Falshood, of disapproving himself, of more Love or Inclination to Sin than to his own Holy Image, of Deceit, Lying and Hypocrisy; it makes Men desperate or presumptuous, profane, Libertines, loose and careless; it extinguishes in them all Piety, all Love of God and their Neighbour, all Prayer and Faith and every Vertue, and sows in them the Seeds of all manner of Vices whatsoever.

VIII.  
Great Difficulties attending the System of Particularism in respect of our Redemption.

In the first place I say, that according to this Doctrine God is accused of *changing* his Design, at least, in their Opinion, who dare not deny but God when he created them at first willed the Salvation of all Men: but say, that upon the Fall God wills only the Salvation of some of them; whence it follows that of himself God did not continue in his first Design towards all, but in part only, and that he changed and quitted it as to the Bulk or greater Part. God's Goodness would likewise be but very narrow, if it extended but to a Part of fallen Men, and that much the lesser too; I could easily conceive a much greater Goodness, viz. such a one as extended to all; therefore I should have in Idea a Goodness greater than God had in Reality. Which is absurd.

God would likewise *contradict* himself: because having once implanted and still raising in all Men an Inclination and Desire of Truth, of Goodness, of Happiness, and even of Repentance; if notwithstanding all this he had made an Act and Decree not to pardon them, his Acts wou'd thus be contrary and opposite one to the other.

He wou'd also be *cruel*, or wou'd take pleasure in the Misery and Torment of his Creatures, if having it in his Power to will the Salvation of all Men, and to offer it to all, he refused to will and procure them a Good so much in his Power, and to remove an Evil which

Chap. XI. which we take to be so easily removeable; and all this only because it is his Pleasure it shou'd be so; though if he pleased, he might easily decree and do otherwise. Therefore wou'd he take pleasure in the Torments of his Creatures only because he found it pleasant so to do, which is the very Essence of Cruelty.

He wou'd be visibly *partial*, if of Subjects equally disposed he took some and passed by others, if he treated them unequally, especially where the Disproportion is so dreadful as it is between the Salvation of some and the Damnation of others, and this merely because he was pleased to do so, without all regard to the antecedent Dispositions of these Subjects.

He wou'd likewise be a *Deceiver*, if, though by the Voice of Nature, of Conscience, and Scripture he protest he wills the Good, the Repentance and Life of all, he yet shou'd have a contrary Will.

He wou'd likewise *disapprove of himself* if he were not willing his Image shou'd be restored in such as it might be restored in; or if having it in his Power by Redemption to render all Men capable of receiving his Image he wou'd not do it but in regard of a few. He must therefore needs approve of the Absence of his own Image in Subjects where it might be; and so wou'd dislike his own Presence, and wou'd take more delight and Love in the Absence of his Image (which Absence is in Man Sin) than he wou'd have Inclination to his Holy Image; that is to say, that with regard to the greatest part of Men *he would prefer Sin before Holiness*.

Besides, the whole *Procedure* of God, his *Instructions*, *Exhortations* and *Commands*, his *Promises* and *Threatnings*, and the whole Content of the Scripture which speaks of all and to all, at least to all that are called, and even to the most hardened Sinners and to such as perish, declaring they shall receive Good if they hearken and obey, and Evil if they refuse, wou'd be nothing but a Heap of *Lies* and *Deceits*, of *Hypocrisy*, and *Delusion*, if all this while God in Truth meant it but for some few. 'Tis said God does seriously and in good earnest propose to them the Nature of Good and of Truth, and if they do this, such and such things shall follow: which is to say, that God shews them in  
Speculation

Speculation and in the Air Truth and Good, and lets Chap. XI.  
'em see the Consequences of 'em, and the Connexion of  
the Premises with such Consequences: but all this while  
there is nothing for 'em. God explains Logick to 'em, the  
Nature of the Consequences of general Propositions,  
*καθ' ὅλας πρῶτον*, and they that mind not this Logick  
Lecture, this vain and speculative Theory, wherein  
they are not at all concerned shall be more culpable  
and more deserving Damnation than they were before.  
What Absurdities are these! and what a pity would it  
be, shou'd these poor Hearers of Logick, or any other,  
fancy themselves once to be some of the particularly  
predestinated ones!

Then they need but follow the most natural Logick  
in the World, and they will easily thence draw Con-  
sequences to make them *presumptuous*, *Libertines*, pro-  
phane, full of Security, little upon their Guard, negli-  
gent and remiss. But if they think themselves repro-  
bated, besides the same Dangers of Prophaneness, Liber-  
tinism and Impiety to which they lie open, they run  
also great hazard of *Despair*.

It is to lessen the Love of God in Men, and to render  
him *hateful* to the greatest part of them, thus to make  
him merciful but to the smallest Number of them.

It lessens the Love of our Neighbour to represent more  
than the half of Men as objects that God neither loves  
nor wills the Salvation of; whence it will follow that  
none are obliged to love all Men or all their Neigh-  
bours, since our Love ought not to be larger than  
God's, whose Love we ought to imitate.

It destroys all Prayers, to believe that God has abso-  
lutely disposed of Mens eternal Good and Ill, antece-  
dently to our Prayers and independently on them.

It makes void Faith: for how can I believe the Pro-  
mises of God, and set my self to embrace the good  
Things he shews me, seeing they have been offered  
thousands as well as me, God never intending for all  
that to give them to them.

Lastly, It fairly offers at the Destruction of all manner of  
Vertues and at the planting and raising all sorts of Vices,  
as is easily deducible from the Reasons just now touch'd  
upon.



Chap. XI. If it be said, that Experience does not verifie this, but rather the contrary in those that hold this Doctrine, supposing it Sr. *Augustin's*: I answer, that we are not beholden to the Doctrine of Predestination for this, but to the Doctrine of immediate and inwardly operating Grace, which those Persons humbly embrace, and which serves them as a Counter-poison to hinder the dire Effects the Doctrine of rigid Predestination wou'd have were it entertained by it self, and the Consequences of its desultory Visions closely followed through all their Inconsistancies: for nothing can be more whimsical and fuller of Contradictions than this Doctrine is. Some Men are destinated to Life, others to Damnation, out of pure Humour: and these are more heavily damned if they reject the Means never designed for them; and if the other reject them, all shall be made up to them again by an imaginary Imputation and a strong fancyful Faith. If the one do but once believe, they are presently sure they shall persevere; if the other chance to believe, it signifies nothing, their Faith shall be but *temporary*: the Ill of the one shall turn to their Good, and the Good of the other shall in the End turn to their Ill. I shou'd never have done shou'd I reckon up all the Absurdities this Doctrine swarms with.

IX. Difficulties in the System of Particularism in relation to Providence and Liberty.

IX. But those that spring up from the third Head of this System of Particularism, from what relates to Providence, to God's Determination and Inflexion of our Liberty, and the like, are altogether as extravagant. I shall press them only with one of them, and that is this, that if God determines all Events and all the Particulars of them, if he does efficaciously influence and determine every thing, even our very Liberty; if he infallibly and indeclinably bends it (to follow the Language of the Schools) I then say, that not only there is no such thing as Liberty, but what is more, that there is no such thing as Holiness in God, and that he is the Friend of Sin. But if it be true, as it certainly is, that God and his Will is the supreme Good, and Sin the highest Evil, God must necessarily have an infinite Aversion to Sin. And if God have an infinite Aversion to Sin, therefore is every thing that is in God infinitely removed from Sin. Therefore ought his

Divine Power effectually to evidence this infinite Aversion to it, or infinitely exert Acts of Aversion to Sin; that is to say, do all it cou'd to hinder it and to oppose it. So likewise God's Consent, Will and Permission must needs be infinitely remov'd from it. Has he an infinite Aversion to a thing, who can, yet will not hinder it, but wills it, decrees it, permits it, approves and likes it shou'd exist? These Difficulties, which in our System vanish like a Shadow, I wou'd fain have any one try to resolve by the common one; and I confess if they can, that Miracles are not ceas'd. Nor will I urge them with this, that following this System of theirs it is impossible to explain how God exhorts Men not to deprive themselves of the good Things he foretells, and to escape the Evils prophecy'd against them, this is inexplicable the common way, and is to be done only by supposing, that notwithstanding the Predictions of them, they may yet either come or not come to pass.

X. All these and many more Difficulties that I omit; but more especially such as concern God's Love for the Salvation of Men, and his Aversion to their Damnation, and to Sin which is the most essential part of it, have made all such as have enjoy'd God's pure Light speak of rigid and particular Predestination with Abhorrence and Execration. A Monster this which Mystick Divinity, the purest and brightest of all, knows nothing of and utterly banishes. There you may see in a hundred Authors, and in as many Places, that Man is free to let Grace operate or to reject it; there you may see that if *Jesus Christ* cou'd but hinder the Damnation of one only Soul by coming and dying again for it, and by displaying all the Effects of his Power and Goodness, he wou'd not fail to do all he possibly cou'd. There have been some Holy Souls (a) whom God expressly commanded to declare to Men, that the Doctrine of Predestination, was a Diabolical Doctrine and expressly contrary to the Gospel, which aims at the Salvation of all Men.

Mrs. Bourignon, who had the Spirit of God in so high a Degree, was us'd to say of the *Jansenists*, some of whom were her Friends, (b) They go to reform the Church, the Babel- but it is with Errors, among all which there never was a

Chap. XI.

W

X. All  
purely en-  
lighten'd  
Persons  
have ab-  
hor'd Par-  
ticularism.

(a) J. En-  
gelbers.  
Pref. to  
the New  
Heaven.

(b) Confu-  
sion of  
Workers,  
Lett. 1.

Chap. XI. *greater than that of Predestination; and of Labadie and his Followers that were her Enemies, and put out a Book against her wherein they have carried these Matters to an excessive Supralapsism, and where they shew they have Stomach enough to digest Iron, Fire and Flames, Reprobation, Sin, Hell with all that dire Train; I hold nothing agreeable to his Sentiments; he is stiff for Predestination; and I, for my part, take it to be the most pernicious Doctrine in Christendom (a).*

(a) Salu- I could produce a great many like Testimonies of other Per-  
tary Ad- sons (b), who had undoubted Marks of receiving their  
vices. Lights immediately from God; but I think it not ne-  
Lett. 22. cessary, for that, the most equitable Persons that yet

(b) Vide hold particular Predestination, do without that, freely  
Vossii Hi- own they are very sensible of the Difficulties and the  
storia Pe- grievous Consequences of it, and cou'd they any other  
lag. Lib. 7. way get rid of them they wou'd not stick to quit their  
Part 1. own, provided this new way they must take were not  
it self Subject to the same or greater Difficulties.

XI. *The* XI. This, or something like it, is what I have read  
*Equity of* with Pleasure in a famous Author who has writ one of  
*some that* the latest upon this Subject. (b) *Is there any Man of so*  
*are for Par-* little Sincerity as to say he finds no trouble at all in this,  
*ticularism.* and that he can easily shew how this agrees with God's hatred

(b) Judg- of Sin? To speak sincerely, it must be own'd, that we cannot  
ment up- here answer any thing for God that will satisfy and silence  
on the the Reason of Man. And it is true, considering the Me-  
Methods thods that have hitherto appear'd; the Author gene-  
of Provi- rously owns it of his own, and impartially declares in  
dence and favour of any one more commodious, cou'd he meet  
Grace, p. with it. I remove, says he, as well as possibly I can these  
91. and (invidious) Consequences from my System: but yet I find I  
101. cannot do it so well as I wou'd. I meet with things in God's  
Conduct that I comprehend not; and I have much a do to  
reconcile his hatred of Sin with Providence; and this Thorne  
is so troublesome to me, that if any one will pull it out, I  
will immediately come over to him, and will sacrifice to him  
my Idea of a Being infinitely perfect (c).

(c) Ibid. Our System requires not so much of him: and I pre-  
p. 63. tend by it to take away this and all other Thorns, by  
shewing the Idea of a Being infinitely perfect in its own  
Brightness more than any have yet, so far am I from  
tullying in the least that glorious Idea.

This



This, it may be, is but Presumption to think so. Chap. XI. But too, were it really so, where were the Presumption to say it? Or is it Presumption to endeavour such a thing? Men of Sense and Equity will not say so; and they cannot but approve a Design which I will with Pleasure express in the clear Words of the fore-cited Author. (a) Every one is in quest of such a way of explaining Providence and Grace, as will salve the Holiness and Justice of God, and entirely secure them; as will leave Man in full Liberty, and make him the sole Author of his Miseries, so that not the least of them shall be laid upon God. A good Design this; and if any one be able to find out a Method that shall perfectly execute this Design, and remove all my Difficulties, I do here declare my self on his side. For there is no one more uneasy under these Difficulties than my self. But before I quit my Party, and St. Augustin's School, I must wish him to do me these two things. The first, not to cast the least blot upon the Idea of a Being infinitely perfect: The second, that he absolutely and entirely take away all these Difficulties and leave not so much as one. For if after having carried me over into one of these milder Methods he leaves me charg'd with the very same heavy Weights I was before, 'tis plain I am cheated, and he has not been so good as his Word. I had been as well left where I was before. I say therefore in the first Place, that these softening Methods must leave me my Idea of an infinitely perfect Being whole and entire. for I cannot go from it if I would. 'Tis to no purpose to heap Difficulties upon Difficulties, I shall never be made to believe (1.) that an infinitely perfect Being is ignorant of any thing; (2.) that he may have inefficacious Wills; (3.) that he may will a thing and yet not do it; (4.) that any thing happens in the World that is not within the order of his Providence; (5.) that he is in any dependance on Creatures; (6.) that he is oblig'd to follow them and to work pursuant to their capricious Humours; (7.) that the Creature is independent on God; (8.) that it can resist his Will and hinder the Execution of his Purposes.

XII. Nothing can be more reasonable than the Demand here made, that Satisfaction be given to these Difficulties by that Method which shall be pretended more commodious than others. I think whoever understands the System and the Truth of all the preceding

XII. All these Difficulties are solvable by our System.

Chap. XI. ding Tracts, will easily perceive that by the help of them these Difficulties appear none at all, and even that in divers Places I have given Answers to the Substance and thing it self, if not to the very Terms of them. But there being others still behind in the Solution of which I intend to spend the rest of this Treatise, I will begin with a Word or two concerning these, and then set down the other, and first, those drawn from Reason, and after those from Scripture.

## C H A P. XII.

*A Solution of the preceding Difficulties according to our System. That the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being is by it preserv'd untouch'd and entire.*

I. The first  
Difficulty  
concerning  
the Perfe-  
ction of  
God's  
Knowledge  
and his  
Foreknow-  
ledge. The  
Answer.



“T is contrary, they say, to the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being to be ignorant of any thing, viz. of things future: for a Being that knew things to come and penetrated into future Eternity, would be much perfecter; therefore I could conceive something much perfecter than God, viz. a Being that knew all things.

I have many things to say upon this Point. First, The Idea of the infinite Perfection of a Being, necessarily requires that this Being be perfect by the sole Idea and Knowledge of himself and of himself alone, and excludes the Necessity of any other Knowledge whatever, of any other Object and of any other Idea: for these things, or the Idea of them cannot be necessary to this perfect Being, except this perfect Being were imperfect without them, which is a Contradiction. If it be said that this perfect Being that is Self-sufficient with the Knowledge of himself only, does by this necessarily know his own Power, and by Consequence the Objects of this Power, all creatable Beings and all their possible Modes; this is to say nothing.

God

God knows his own Power by the Consideration he Chap. XII  
has of it, that if he be pleased to go out of himself  
whatever he pleases shall be done, but he does not here-  
by determine or as yet formally know any thing of  
possible Beings. He only knows his own Sufficiency  
for every thing he shall be pleased to will.

Moreover if this Being infinitely perfect foreknew  
every thing determinately, this infinitely perfect Being  
wou'd be ignorant, impotent, and imperfect. He  
wou'd be ignorant; for he wou'd not have the Idea of  
a free and indeterminate Being; and so wou'd want a  
most excellent Idea and Knowledge: for it is certain  
that the Idea of but one single free Being is of more  
Worth and Excellence than all the Ideas of the Uni-  
verse. He wou'd be impotent; for in this case he  
cou'd not order things any other way than as they are  
determinately foreseen: and he wou'd himself be fatal-  
ly tied up to all Eternity in all his Acts: which is  
what I have demonstrated to be false and absurd (a). (a) Oec.  
He wou'd be imperfect; for (to reason *ad hominem*) not of the  
knowing any thing free, a Being that shou'd know a Creat.  
thing that was free wou'd be more perfect than Chap. 13.  
him.

The Truth is, all Things and Ideas that are not the  
Idea of the Divinity (b), are arbitrary to God; they are (b) Vol. I.  
to him only an indifferent, free and not necessary Sport, Ch. 2, 3, 4.  
which he might be without or institute at choice; Cog. Rat.  
make things more or less free, and so foresee their Du- Lib. 3:  
ration and Conduct more or less determinately; but it Cap. 10.  
is a Contradiction determinately to foresee a thing that  
is indeterminate.

The arbitrary Knowledge of God must not be con-  
ceived an eternal indivisible and immutable Thing.  
He is free to enlarge it more or less at pleasure: and  
when he extends it to know a thing free and indeter-  
minate, it is then of much larger Extent, than if by it  
he knew a Million of things determinate. It must not  
then be said that God is ignorant of future Determina-  
tions; but that then he is pleased to know a more per-  
fect Principle than any thing that is of a determinate  
Nature: that his Knowledge has then a more perfect  
and larger Object than all determinate Objects are;  
and that if he knew nothing but what was determinate



Chap. XII he wou'd then be ignorant of the beautiful Idea and excellent Principle of Liberty.

We shou'd know once for all, that the Idea of a Being infinitely perfect subsists by it self alone, without any other Idea; and that whatever afterwards becomes of Things and Ideas that are not this infinitely perfect Being, this neither takes away nor adds any thing to the Idea of the infinitely perfect Being, who being content and perfect by himself alone, deals with other things as he pleases: it is almost necessary upon this Occasion to remember the Second, Third and Fourth Chapters of the *Oeconomy of the Creation*; to form a just Representation of the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being, and his true Properties.

II. *The second Difficulty about the Efficacy of God's Wills. The Answer,*

II. It is said, that a Being infinitely perfect cannot have ineffectual Wills, for one might then conceive something more perfect, *viz.* a Being whose Wills were effectual. I answer, That the Wills of the infinitely perfect Being touching free Agents are not ineffectual; because God wills they shou'd act freely; and then whatever they do thus, his Will is fulfilled. Therefore God's Wills have been effectual though not fatally determining, if they were so, they wou'd not be effectual; since God willing, free Creatures wou'd not have this Will of his accomplished.

III. *The third Difficulty, whether a perfect Being may have resistable Desires and Wishes. The Answer*

III. 'Tis said, in the third Place, that an infinitely perfect Being cannot will a thing (as the Salvation of all Men) and yet not do it; that he cannot have imperfect Wills, or say *I fain wou'd*: otherwise, one might conceive a Being more perfect than him, a Being that shou'd say in every case, *I will, and nothing can resist my Will*. I answer, first, that this cannot be said in relation to Holiness and Sin. Dare any one think that God does not will that all Men shou'd love him, and that they do not sin against him and resist his Divine Will.

In the second Place I say, that supposing God once to have will'd there shou'd be such things as free Creatures, it is Contradiction to say, the infinitely perfect Being cannot have *I fain wou'ds* but only absolute *I wills*. The quite contrary is true. He is not now to have any absolute *I wills*, in things wherein their Liberty is concerned, for so he wou'd destroy his own

Establish.

Establishment, his Work, and his own first and absolute Will, and thereby wou'd be imperfect. He must have *Ifain woulds*; because all Creatures being of little or no Importance to him, and he generously desiring only their Advantage, having also made them free, it follows hence that he must needs will, but not absolutely, their Advantage. It is a palpable Contradiction to say, that a perfect Being cannot will a thing without doing it himself. For if he wills that a thing be done by some other thing, to which he gives the Power of doing it as this other thinks fit, it is plain he cou'd not himself do it without a Contradiction. These Wills are not imperfect Wills, nor do these Desires imply any Defect of Power in God. God's Desires that Man wou'd do freely what he has given him Power to do are perfect and serious Desires. The absolute Completion and Perfection which these Men contend for in these Desires of God, wou'd be the Destruction of his Design and of his free Works; and wou'd be contradictory to what God requires of his Creature, that it act and co-operate on its own part.

A Self-sufficient Being, to which all outward Communication of himself is a thing merely arbitrary, and who is pleas'd to communicate himself to some Subjects as largely as they shall think good to receive him, and who gives them Power to receive him at their own choice, can and ought only to expect and desire his Creature wou'd actually chuse him, and be always ready to correspond with it in Proportion to its free Determination of it self towards him. Is this arbitrary Design and this Conduct of God impossible, or absurd and unbecoming God, or unintelligible? or rather is it not Light and easiness it self?

IV. It is said in the fourth Place, that it is contrary to the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being that any thing shou'd come to pass in the World and not be within the Ordering of his Providence. To which I say it is Contradiction to think the Order of God's Providence shou'd stand in need of Sin or Disorder. Sin cannot but be against the Order of his Providence; but it once happening, Providence checks its Eruption after such a Manner as is sufficiently explain'd in this

Treatise

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IV. The fourth Difficulty with the Answer

Chap. XII Treatise for any that will think on't without Prejudice.

V. The  
fifth Diffi-  
culty and  
Answer.

V. The fifth Difficulty is this, that it is incompatible with the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being, to depend upon Creatures: for did it so I cou'd conceive a Being more perfect; viz. one that shou'd no way at all depend on Creatures.

I answer, this is true but does not at all affect our System, which makes neither the Nature nor the essential Attributes of God at all depending on Creatures, nor indeed so much as his arbitrary Ones; though God has himself been pleased to vary his arbitrary Ideas and their Combination upon occasion of that Liberty he was pleased to give some Creatures. It wholly depended upon God to establish Things thus or not; but having been pleased so to do, the Variation of his Ideas in consequence of the Creatures Liberty, is a Consequence depending originally on the Divine Institution. The Light of the Sun depends neither on me nor my Eyes, though it depends on me to vary a thousand Ways the Admission and the Operation of it upon me, or wholly to exclude it. It wou'd not be amiss to consider more particularly this Comparison, which you may see done in another Place more largely (a).

(a) Oec.  
of the  
Creat. Ch.  
18. § 7.

VI. The  
sixth Diffi-  
culty with  
the Answer

VI. The Idea of a perfect Being, as 'tis objected in the sixth Place, will not endure, that he be obliged to follow his Creatures, and to work after their Caprice.

I answer, that indeed absolutely speaking God is not obliged to any thing. But if he please to make free Creatures, and if it be his Will to oblige himself to work with them and in them by way of Correspondence with the Conduct of their Liberty; not only any one cannot hinder him from it, or think it strange he shou'd do so; but also the Idea of a perfect Being containing in it Truth and Faithfulness, does then necessarily require that he act according to the free and voluntary Behaviour of his Creature. And this is the Foundation of God's Covenants and Promises.

VII. The  
Answer to  
the seventh  
Difficulty.  
(b) Oec.  
of the  
Creation, Chap. 3. § 7, 8, 9.

VII. 'Tis pretended as the seventh Difficulty, that were Creatures independent on God it wou'd ruine the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being. I have at large satisfied this Difficulty in the first Treatise (b). The

Idea



Idea of an infinitely perfect Being is much more amplified or illustrated by holding that there depends on the Divine Institution a certain Nature of Beings to which God has given, to represent his own Independance, the free Conduct of their Acts, than if we shou'd say that he cou'd not do this. Which I have also proved in another Place (a).

VIII. I have likewise so fully satisfied the following Difficulty in another Place (b) and all the Members of it, that I may well forbear saying any more to it here: yet will I say this one Word more, that it is so far from belonging to the Idea of a Being infinitely perfect, that it be impossible to resist his Will; that on the contrary, Sin is therefore only infinitely evil and imperfect because it is an actual and formal Resistance to the Will of an infinitely perfect Being; and that Damnation is therefore only miserable because it is an Hindrance, not of his Design in general, but, of the particular Admission and Execution of this Design in some particular Persons. Why shou'd it be contrary to the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being to say, that free Creatures were the Cause that he did not do and ratifie as to them what he was not pleased to do but upon Condition of their Correspondence and of their freely willing it? I think one cannot without enormous Falsity alledge any other Reasons of the Creature's Damnation.

Thus, I think, the Idea of an infinitely perfect Being remains entirely untouch'd by such a Method as explains Providence and Grace after such a Manner as salves the Holiness and Justice of God, that preserves them perfectly in their full Brightness, and leaves Man entirely free, and makes him the sole Author of his Miseries, so that none of them can be charged upon God. Let who will now side with me. In the mean while I will continue my Answers to the rest of the Difficulties that still remain upon this Subject.

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(a) Ibid.  
Chap. 16.  
§ 11, 12,  
13. & Ch.  
17. § 2.

VIII. *An Answer to the eighth Difficulty.*

(b) Occ.  
of Sin,  
Chap. 7.  
§ 2, 3, 4, 5.

## C H A P. XIII.

*Four Capital and Artificial Difficulties against the System of Universal Grace in favour of Supralapsism and Particularism. The Solution of 'em.*

I. Four main Difficulties oppos'd against the Universality of Grace.

I.



AMONG the many artificial Difficulties that are rais'd against the Universality of God's Grace in defence of the opposite Doctrine, there are four principal ones, which I intend to propose and solve. The *first* is taken from the

Principle and Motive of God's Actions; the *second*, from the Consideration of the Execution and Event of them; the *third*, from the Consideration of the Nature of Divine Actions; the *fourth*, from the Consideration of Man's Duty.

(1.) The *first* is this, and it is drawn from the Foundation of Supralapsism.

(1.) God, say they, was pleas'd to make Creatures for the Manifestation of his Glory. The Manifestation of God's Glory consists in the Manifestation of his Attributes. Among other of his Attributes there is his Justice, and his Mercy. Salvation is the Manifestation of his Mercy, and Damnation is the Manifestation of his Justice: Now God owes his Creatures nothing, and may do what he pleases with them. Therefore he might (owing them nothing) and ought (since he intended to manifest the Glory of his Justice and Mercy) he might, I say, and ought to create some to manifest the Glory of his Mercy in their Salvation, and to create others to shew the Glory of his Justice by their eternal Death and Damnation. You see here the Grounds of *Supralapsism*: and if they be sound, our System will be good for nothing.

II. This Doctrine gives a frightful Idea of God and his Glory.

II. I cannot without a very sensible Grief see Men suffer themselves to be so extremely blinded by the Devil, as to propose so frightful a Doctrine as this is, as a grand Means to shew forth God's Glory. God's Glory consists in having his Vertues known and recogniz'd to be in a most bright and peaceful Harmony and Agreement

Agreement with one another. The Vertues, or Attributes of God are Beauty, Goodness, Joy, Delight; and all that is in God is of this Nature; and therefore all he manifests of himself externally must be such too. In him there is no Darkness, nor Torment, nor Fire devouring with eternal Rage and Fury.

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How then shou'd he manifest such things outwardly? He cannot with Pomp and Glory manifest any thing but his Meekness, Love and bright Joy. It is Contradiction to fancy he cou'd will and do otherwise, disfigure and draw himself a Devil, as I have demonstrated elsewhere (a). A fine Image this! A fair Representation of God! A beautiful Manifestation of his Attributes indeed! A Creature destin'd to hate and blaspheme God, and to rave in Torment of Soul and Body to all Eternity! I wou'd be glad to know whether these Men wou'd be well pleas'd with such a God had he these Designs upon themselves, and what they wou'd then say and think of their God. To represent a God making Creatures on purpose to torment them, thereby to glorifie and declare some of his pretended Attributes, and for this End to decree they shall infallibly fall, is assuredly the Idea of the Great Devil of Hell, who is not altogether so wicked and detestable a Being.

(a) Oec.  
of the  
Creat.Ch.  
5. § 7, 8, 9.

III. I have before (b) shewn that it was not at all necessary for Sin to intervene to manifest what is substantial of God's Justice and Mercy. As to his Mercy there is nothing that more shocks Common Sense than that odd Idea of it that makes it consist, in willing or permitting Evils and Miseries to happen which one might have hinder'd, to shew afterwards upon that occasion Marks and Effects of Compassion. A pleasant and ridiculous Notion this! A truly merciful Person had much rather hinder, or at least do all he can to hinder Evils, than let them happen out of pure Humour, to shew afterwards that he is touch'd with Compassion at them. To act otherwise wou'd be rather Malignity and Hypocrisy than Mercy: and this is what they that stand so much upon St. Augustin's Doctrine ought to acknowledge. *Et si approbetur; (c) officio charitatis qui dolet miserum, mallet tamen utiq; non esse quod*

III. The  
Interven-  
tion of Sin  
is not ne-  
cessary to  
manifest  
either the  
Mercy or  
Justice of  
God; and  
that nei-  
ther of 'em  
are mani-  
fested by  
the Supra-  
lapsarian  
System.

(b) Supr.  
Ch. 2. § 2.

(c) Aug. Conf. Lib. 3. cap. 2.



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*doleret, qui germanitus misericors est. Si enim est male-  
vola benevolentia (quod fieri non potest) potest & ille qui  
veraciter sinceriterq; miseretur, cupere esse miseros ut mi-  
sereatur: that is, " Though he that is touch'd with  
" Compassion towards the miserable, be to be com-  
" mended for this his Act of Love, yet if he be truly  
" merciful he had rather there were none in a Condition  
" that needed his Pity. And it is as impossible he shou'd  
" desire there shou'd be some in Misery that he might  
" have occasion of shewing his Pity, as it is for Kind-  
" ness to be Malicious, or that our Good-will to our  
" Neighbour shou'd incline us to wish Ill to him. This  
Reflexion well pursued is enough to ruine the whole  
System of Modern Predestination.*

It is more especially very plain with respect to God's Justice, that neither Sin nor the Misery of Damnation is necessary to its Manifestation. For Justice in God is no Property of a Tyrant and cruel Executioner, that requires for its Portraiture and Picture, for its Representation and Manifestation, the endless and dreadful Torments of a poor Creature destin'd to them before it was born by inevitable Means and Decrees. But it is an effectual Will by which God has so order'd Things, that it shall befall every one according to his Choice. This Justice may be manifested without any such thing as Sin or Damnation; and God designed to manifest it only in the way of Good, by rendring to every one different Measures of Good, greater or less, in exact Proportion to their Choice more or less full, ardent and lasting as they shou'd make of God, of his Goods, his Vertues, and of his different Works.

It is by Accident and through Man's Fault alone, and against God's Will, that this Justice comes to be manifested in Evil; neither does he manifest it by willing and positively causing Torments; but barely by leaving Man to himself after having found that he is resolved to continue wilfully in the Rejection of his Divine Grace. But had not Man had the Liberty to chuse Life or Death, had not God offered him Life, but he had fall'n by mere Fatality, without having by a Choice, so free that he might not have done it, embraced Death and Sin; wou'd not the adjudging him to Damnation have been a rare Administration and

Ma-

Manifestation of Justice? *Justice* supposes a free and antecedent Act of the Person on whom it is executed; otherwise it is mere Good-pleasure, and where Pain is inflicted nothing but a malicious Caprice.

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IV. How  
God may,  
or may not  
do what  
he pleases  
with his  
Creatures.

IV. But, say they, God may do what he will with his Creatures, since he owes them nothing. Very well, this then is no Manifestation of his Justice; but of his Freedom and Indifference. And what follows from this Liberty God may take with his Creatures; He indeed owes them no Good; much less does he owe them any Hurt; For he is no Devil. He may therefore do what he will with them, but it must be in some Good or other; either give them none at all by leaving 'em in their Nothingness; or a little, by making them of Earth; or a great deal, by making them after his own Image, and thereby qualifying them to bear such of his bright, happy, and glorious Attributes as he shall think meet, and to what Degree he pleases. But to think God can do with his Creatures even in Evil what he pleases, or rather what Man's capricious Humour is pleased to ascribe to him, is so horrid a thing that I tremble when I think on't, and when I look upon all the Parts of the rare System grounded upon that Supposition: and the fine Methods they cut out for God: for in fine, it is as if they shou'd make him say thus: "I, that am in my self bright and happy, and  
" that have no need to produce any Creatures at all  
" for my essential Glory, yet will I do it arbitrarily  
" to manifest what is in me. And upon this Principle  
" they will be bright and happy, which is what I can  
" make them all; but for all this, though I have in  
" me neither Darkness nor Torment nor Rage, and  
" though I be infinitely remov'd from any such Thing,  
" yet will I make Creatures that shall have in them all  
" these Qualities, and that to represent and manifest  
" such Things as are not in me, and which I abhor;  
" and I will have this called, *my vindictive Justice*. I  
" will make these Creatures capable of an infinite  
" Good which I intend never to give them, and this  
" will prove their Torment: and by this it shall be  
" seen that I am just; for they shall be deprived of  
" this infinite Happiness by means of a Decree of  
" mine, which I will make merely because I will.

Never-

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“ Nevertheless I will create them at first with this  
 “ Light and Good within them; but then I will leave  
 “ them without effectual Help, and will order all the  
 “ Circumstances of their Fall; I will my self cause all  
 “ the Angel’s, the Devil’s and the Serpent’s Acts, and  
 “ Motions, and even the Acts of their Thoughts;  
 “ for all depends upon my particular Decree, Con-  
 “ course and Influence. And all this while I will make  
 “ them believe it was all owing to themselves that  
 “ things were not otherwise; though in truth they  
 “ cou’d not have gone otherwise in case I were not  
 “ willing to decree, move, and determine them other-  
 “ wise. Of these Men fall’n into a State of Damna-  
 “ tion, though I cou’d with the same ease lift them all  
 “ up again, and be not a whit the less happy and  
 “ glorious my self, and though they be all equally ca-  
 “ pable of this Favour of mine; yet will I restore but  
 “ a very few of them, and in them I will so work that  
 “ they shall not be able to resist me: and how is it pos-  
 “ sible they shou’d, they not being able to act of them-  
 “ selves neither against my Determination nor against  
 “ my Decrees? As for the others, that make the greater  
 “ Number, I leave them to the Devil. My Grace and  
 “ eternal Salvation is not for them; nor indeed can  
 “ they determine themselves to receive them though  
 “ I presented them to them. Yet, do I exhort them  
 “ to do it, I make a great Noise and Stir, command,  
 “ threaten, and pray, I thunder and lighten finely,  
 “ enjoining upon a Penalty to which they are al-  
 “ ready predestinated, that in case they design not to  
 “ aggravate their Damnation, they wou’d not resist a  
 “ Grace not intended for them and which I will not  
 “ offer them, or but by Halves, or with an Intent to  
 “ take it from them again, or by refusing them what  
 “ is necessary for their preserving of it, and which they  
 “ cannot of themselves have. And because they have  
 “ not done what it was impossible they shou’d, and  
 “ what they cou’d not have done without arguing me  
 “ to be impotent, inconstant and ignorant in my De-  
 “ crees and Foresight, and because they have not done  
 “ what I never design’d they shou’d, and what I never  
 “ cordially and really meant they shou’d, I will cast  
 “ them into Hell, to which place I had also predesti-  
 “ nated



“ nated them before any Foresight of their Behaviour :  
 “ and by this Means I will let all see how just and  
 “ equal I am in my Dealings, acting according to  
 “ exact Equity and Justice with every one, disposing of  
 “ them as I think fit without any regard to their Dis-  
 “ positions : for I can do what I will with my Crea-  
 “ tures, and I owe them nothing. So that now Men  
 “ plainly see me manifested as just, and therefore  
 “ ought to glorifie me, and acknowledge me to be a  
 “ wonderful and infinitely lovely Being. See what  
 “ fine and rare Inventions these are !

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V. (2.) But I'll leave them to come to the Difficulty V(2) *Whether we are to measure God's Intention and Designs by the Event of things.*  
 that is rais'd from the Consideration of the Event of things and the Execution of them. Since after all, say they, it will in the Event be found that few shall be sav'd, and the greater part damn'd, why shou'd we not measure God's Will and Designs by this Issue of things? And is it not likewise true in sound Philosophy, that what is last in Execution, was first in Intention? *Quod ultimum est in executione, illud primum est in intentione,* say the Learned. Now in the Execution of things, what God does last, is, his saving some and damning others ; therefore was this his first Intention.

I answer, that these rare Principles do no more nor less than authorise all the Sins, all the horrid and devilish Villanies in the World and in Hell : for the Event has already discover'd in part these Abominations, and will hereafter eternally discover them in Hell : this will be the Issue ; and this will be executed : and must we therefore from hence take an estimate of God's Will and Designs, and say, that all the Ill that has or ever will happen is what God first design'd ? On the quite contrary, we shou'd separate the Event of evil Things from God's Design, because they are Evil ; and because the last Execution of God as to what concerns the Wicked, will be his strange and unaccustom'd Work, (as has been above (a) explain'd) therefore we shou'd conclude it was not what he first intended. When to any Design there happens something foreign and accessory, and indeed contrary to the principal Work, as Sin is in regard of God's Design and Works, then all that is done toward this foreign Business, was not what was at first intended. This Rule of Philosophy is then

*This would authorise all the Abominations of the World and of Hell, and that the contrary is true concerning Evil.*

(a) Supr.  
Chap. 10.  
§ 4, &c.

Chap. XIII. only true when nothing opposite or foreign to the Design does by Accident supervene. To this I add, that as God does not positively punish the Wicked, and as he will at last leave both them and their eternal Blasphemies and think no more on them, so shou'd we thence infer, that his first Intention was neither to think of Sins nor Sinners, and so not to predestinate any either to Sin or Damnation.

VI God's Designs touching the Salvation of all, are not in vain, tho' all be not sav'd.

VI. (3.) But say they, for the *third* main Difficulty, (and this they dwell mightily upon) God cannot design or act in vain and so as to be frustrated: for all he does ought to have on it the Marks of his Reality, Power and Wisdom.

How therefore cou'd he have either the Will or Design to save all, seeing this Design is not brought about, but vanishes into Smoak as to the greatest part of Men?

My Answer is, God did not design to save all Men absolutely, mechanically, by force and physical Operation; but freely, and as they themselves shou'd be willing. Now this is and always shall be fulfill'd. If any one will freely forsake God, God's Design even with regard to such an one does not vanish into Air; because it never was nor ever will be any Design of God's to save Men without the Mediation of their Liberty. He has been, is, and ever will be pleas'd that his Salvation find Entrance and Reception from Man's Liberty, and he has given him his Choice and Power to do it as he will himself, as has been prov'd already (a).

(a) Oec. of the Creation, Chap. 17.

Hence we see that let the Event be what it will, this Design will stand unshaken, which it wou'd not by the Doctrine that asserts God absolutely and infallibly determines our Liberty.

VII. What God and Jesus Christ have done for the Salvation of all Men is not in vain tho' all were not saved.

VII. But what will become, as they still urge us, then of so many Actions of God and of Jesus Christ his Intercession, his Death, the Offers of his Light and Grace, which we pretend are tender'd even to the Wicked, who for all that are damn'd? Wou'd not all this be at least useless and in vain? And can God act in vain?

Answer. God does nothing in vain in this Sense, as if he lost somewhat he stood in need of, and of which he was depriv'd after he had lost it.

Secondly,

Secondly, Those very things which in respect of the Wicked and Rebellious are rendred useles, viz. the Lights and Grace of God, the Fruits and Effects of the Intercession and Death of *Jesus Christ*, these things which the Wicked reject does God take again and give a double Portion of them to the Righteous. The Talent given to the sloathful Servant was not a thing in vain. God was far from letting it be lost, but took it away again and gave it to the faithful Servant, whose Portion was thereby made greater.

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In the *third* Place. these Offers, Graces and Actions of God are not vain, in as much as they serve to manifest God's grand Charity, and his immense and infinite Love towards his Enemies.

This, in the *fourth* Place, is what all his Creatures, at least so many of them as are good and reasonable are infinitely affected with, and are by it wrapt with inexpressible Admiration, Love and Gratitude towards so prodigious a Mercy of God.

In the *fifth* Place, *Jesus Christ* has the Satisfaction of Conscience and the inward and comfortable Sense, as I may say, and Testimony of having been patient, merciful, and a Lover of his Creatures, of not having been wanting to them in any thing, and of having done on his Part all that the Bowels of his infinite Mercies cou'd inspire his Majesty with.

In the *sixth* Place, those things which we take to be in vain, serve to justifie and openly manifest all God's Ways, his Protestations and Declarations, which wou'd otherwise be unjust, false and delusive.

And *lastly*, they serve to stop all the Murmures and Blasphemies of the Wicked and Damn'd, who are convinc'd of Injustice and Ingratitude, while the Justice, Mercy and Love of God shine as a Sun, which no Clouds can darken. And will any one now say that all these things are still in vain?

VIII. (4.) The most specious Colour that the Subtlety of blind Reason has invented to put upon the barbarous Decree of Reprobation, especially in the Sense of the Supralapsarians, is, the saying (a) that it is but an Effect of Self-love not to be willing to consent to one's

VIII.  
Whether  
Men ought  
to consent  
to their  
own  
own Repro-

bation and Damnation. The Falsity of this Thought. (a) See Yvon. de Predest. p. 143, 144, &c.



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own Damnation : that only Self-love makes this seem hard ; that we shou'd here rather submit to the Will of God, and say to him, *Thy Will be done*, than seek one's own Advantage ; in a Word, that we shou'd deny our own Will and prefer God's before it.

Do we not here behold Satan finely disguis'd like an Angel of Light, and his Cause dress'd up in God's Livery ? But how gross are these Fetches ! How shall Damnation and Reprobation be the Means of pure Love and Self-abnegation ? Will God reprobate and damn his Creatures to oblige them to love him purely and to deny themselves ? Shall Reprobation have Love for its End, or can it or ought it to be done with Love, with Humility and Self-denial ! I know not what Men must think to come to such a pass.

We think, say they, on what Saints often say, that we must love God's Will above our own Salvation, and that they expressly tell us that if God wills our Damnation, we ought to consent to it and say, *Amèn*. I answer, that there are two Things to be considered in Damnation, the one is the Separation from the Love and Holiness of God, or Sin ; and this is the chief part of Damnation ; the other, is the Torments and Pain of Sense. This latter, is but an accessory, which were it not for Sin, wou'd be accompanied with an unspeakable Acquiescence, and wou'd soon vanish, though we expected no such thing nor knew how, nor thought any thing of it. It was with respect to this Pain of Sense, that such Saints, as were in there Purification, where the Pains of Hell are truly felt, (a) have

(a) See the Oecon. of said, that we shou'd consent to this Damnation. without troubling our selves whether it shall last for ever Chap. 5, 6, or not ; and that in this Case we shou'd prefer the Will and Justice of God before our own Interest. But to fancy they so understood it, as that we ought to consent to be separated, were it but for a Moment, from God's Will, to be deprived of his Love and be an Enemy to his Holiness ; that God willed this, and that he has predestinated the greatest Part of Men to this, is horrid and abominable. None but the Devil and his Friends can will this, and require Mens Consent to it ; and to approve of such consenting to ones Damnation, is to defend his Cause. No Saint ever thought

thought of acquiescing in this, nor cou'd they do so without becoming thereby impious and wicked. When God does but seem to withdraw his Love from them, by with-holding from them the Sense of his Union with them, they are so far from consenting to it, that they are extreemly importunate and earnest in Prayer with him not to do so. 'Twas this made a most holy Soul who thought God was forsaking her say on her Death-bed (a); *It is now my Lord five and thirty Years since I begged any thing of thee for my self: now I pray thee not to separate me from thee; thou knowest, O Lord, how intollerable a thing that would be to me. O my Lord, I could easily bear any thing but this Separation; it being contrary to the Soul, with which it cannot subsist.* The Truth of this has been demonstrated in the first Treatise, that the Nature of the Soul was made and constituted of God to be united with him, and not to be separated from him, as the Devil, Sin, Lyes, and Errour wou'd make us believe, and then Christen this abominable Thought by the Name of *God's Cause*; whose Advocates Men pretend to be when they are indeed pleading for the Devil and Sin.

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(a) St.  
Cath. of  
Genoa,  
cap. 49.

IX. 'Tis from the same Blindness that some being hard pressed, that their Doctrine leads Men to Despair, and not knowing how to rid themselves of that Objection, have said, that there is no such great Inconvenience in Despair, and that there is some Despair that is saving. These People are excellent at blowing Hot and Cold. Sometimes they are fierce for crying up the Necessity of Assurance of ones Salvation, and that by an indefectible Faith and Election: and now they change their Note and tell us to despair is a good Thing. But pray what Kind of Despair is it that is so? It is certainly a good Thing to despair of our own Strength, Vertue and Merit, and of any Power of our own to continue in a faithful Correspondence to God's Graces. But to think we ought to despair of God's Love and Mercy, to despair he ever had the Will to save us and to give us his Grace; this I maintain to be damnable and devilish Despair; and yet this is whither the Doctrine of Predestination to Damnation, or that of absolute Preterition directly leads.

IX. Tho' there be one sort of Despair that is good, yet that is not it which proceeds from the Consideration of Reprobation.

X. *A very singular way of answering the Difficulties charg'd upon the Doctrine of Reprobation.*

X. But was there ever a more admirable Method taken, than some have after a very pleasant Manner pitch'd upon to cover their Supralapsism from such Consequences blasphemous and injurious to God as are shewn to follow from it? They lay it down for a Truth, that their Doctrine is of God, that it is his Thought and Cause; and then they think they have all the right in the world to be transported with Anger (they think divine) and Zeal against all such as raise these Objections, as Persons that murmur against God himself, that blaspheme, calumniate, and accuse him of Injustice and Cruelty; and upon this use them as Wicked and Blasphemers. Some it may be will think I do but tell Stories, and suppose Cases that never were; did I not let them know where they might see this rare Course has been taken, by directing them to two or three Libels published by *Labady's* Disciples at all Adventures against Mrs. *Bourignon*, without their being once so much as able to understand her. I think I need not reckon this wonderful Method among the Difficulties that need answering. It is too singular a one to be meddled with, and deserves the Favour commonly shewn to the most rare and most irregular Monsters, to be charily kept for the Rarity Sake, instead of thinking to destroy it.

## CH A P. XIV.

*Difficulties objected from the Scripture. Five general Sources of their Solution. An Answer to some particular Passages.*

I. *The ways of answering Objections drawn from Scripture.*

I.



INTEND not particularly to answer all the Passages that may be alledged from Scripture in defence of a Doctrine contrary to the Truths I have advanc'd, I shou'd think there were now no more Difficulty in them, at least in most of them, after we have once read and understood the Truths contain'd in the preceding Treatises; I have already



already explain'd the greatest part of them in divers Places, as for Example, this, *No Man cometh to me except the Father who has sent me draw him* (a); and this other, *God works in you both to will and to do according to his good Pleasure* (b); and again, *Whom he will God hardens, and shews Mercy to whom he will shew Mercy* (c), and many others as you may have observ'd. I shall content my self here to point out the general Source of the false Interpretations that are put upon these sorts of Passages; and then shall examine two or three of them particularly, and will end with the Consideration of what is most remarkable concerning this Matter in St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.

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(a) Oec. of the Co-oper. cap. 4. § 12. and above, cap. 2. § 13.

(b) Oec. of the Co-oper. cap. 4. n.

14. (c) Oecon. of Sin, cap. 2. § 3.

II. (1.) *First*, Instead of distinguishing the divers sorts of Predestinations, Elections and Reprobations, Men commonly confound them all to set up only such as concern a happy or miserable Eternity. I have elsewhere (d) particularly taken notice of this Inconvenience.

II. *The Sources of these false Interpretations of Scripture-Passages*

*are these.* (d) Oecon. of the Creat. Chap. 19. n. 10.

(2.) *Secondly*, when the Scripture speaks of Election and Reprobation, Men do untowardly suppose 'tis such an Election and Reprobation as directly respects Persons or Individuals, and their State and Disposition only indirectly, which they will have to be but a Consequent of this Election and Reprobation; whereas indeed Election respects directly the States and Dispositions, and indirectly the Persons who fall under this Election or not, according to the State they are already in or acquire, and keep themselves in by their Liberty. It is God's Will directly to chuse that Liberty that gives up it self to him and to the Operations of his Grace, in whatever Persons this Liberty may happen to be thus resigned; and it is his Will to chuse immediately and in consequence of the Liberty thus abandoned to him, *Peter, James or John*, that have not wilfully resisted him. And it is just so in Reprobation. And thus when it is said God chose to himself a People, as the *Israelites*, and that he cast off another People, as the *Edomites*; besides that this

(2.) *Men suppose the immediate Object of Election and Reprobation to be Persons as such and such Individuals; whereas it is the Dispositions of the Heart that are their Object.*

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Does not mean Election to eternal Life, yet if Men will suppose it does, this must not signifie that all the Individuals of the People of *Israel* were elected to Life, and that all the Individuals of the *Edomites* were Personally reprobated or predestinated to Death: but this wou'd signifie that God who is a Lover of Humility and Simplicity, and a Hater of Pride and Haughtiness, did also chuse *Jacob* the humble and the plain, and all such of his Race as shall partake of the same Temper; and reject the haughty and proud *Esau*, and those of his Posterity in whom this Disposition shou'd be predominant. Yet all such particular Persons among the *Israelites* as shall be fierce and proud shall before God be esteemed as Reprobate *Edomites*, because of this Humour and Temper of theirs: and on the contrary, all those particular *Edomites* that shall be of an humble Heart, shall be reckoned by God among the elect *Israelites*. For 'tis the Disposition of Heart that does all with God; 'tis by that we possess God or the Devil, that we become Angels or Devils, *Israelite* or *Edomite*, Elect or Reprobate: that is the immediate and direct Object of Election and Reprobation, and here lies the true Sense of what the Scripture says, that *God is no acceptor of Persons* (a): that is to say, that the direct Object of God's Acceptance, Choice, and Election are not Persons as Persons, but as so and so disposed, and in such and such States pleasing or displeasing to God.

(a) Acts  
10. 34.

(3.) Men  
confound  
the wise,  
bright, just  
and equal  
Good-plea-  
sure of God  
with a  
Good-plea-  
sure of a  
capricious  
and hu-  
moursome  
Man.

(3.) A third Fault Men are guilty of in interpreting Places of Scripture that relate to this Point is this, that whenever there is any thing spoken of the Good-pleasure or Will of God, they presently frame their Notions of God's Good-pleasure and Will from the Caprices of Men, and take it to be just like them, and indeed something worse. Men being ignorant, foolish, fickle and malicious and violent, it ordinarily falls out that in their different Carriage towards different Subjects, they have no other Reason of their different Usage of them, but a pure *I will*, *such is my Will and Good-pleasure*, which is as much as to say, that the true Principle of their Determination is really nothing but Ignorance, Folly, Inconstancy, and often the mere Spitefulness and Haughtiness of their Spirit. But were they wise, enlighten'd, equal and just, their Good-pleasure and

and their *I will* wou'd be quite a different thing. Now God is infinitely wise, luminous, constant, and Justice it self. Therefore is his Good-pleasure and Will a Good-pleasure and Will of *Light*, that makes him see the different Dispositions of Subjects; of *Wisdom*, that makes him award different Treatments and different States to different Subjects; of *Justice*, that makes him so proportion to Men the Issues of Things, as every one may have according to his Choice; and lastly his Good-pleasure is a Will of *Constancy* and Equality, always treating Subjects equally disposed alike; being far from damning one and saving another, reprobating one and chusing another, of two Persons that are of the same Dispositions.

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*He has compassion (a) on whom it pleases him to have (a) Rom. compassion, and whom he pleases he hardeneth, or rejecteth; 9. 18.*

he shews Mercy and refuses it to whom he pleases: that is to say, to whom he thinks good and meet so to do from a resolute and fixt Principle of equal and impartial Justice, and of a clear and bright Wisdom. For the just, impartial, immutable, wise and bright Will of God, has not nor will have any Complacence but only in such Souls as turn to him with Vacuity, Self-denial, Resignation and Humility. God is pleased to make choice of no other; and when he chuses them it is because they are within the Order, and among the Number of the Objects wherein he takes delight. As on the contrary the same just, wise and impartial Will is pleased to leave, where he finds them, all such Souls as are turned towards themselves, their Grandeur, their Works, and their own Strength. These he rejects; because it is not his Pleasure to communicate himself to Subjects thus conditioned. The Scripture in an hundred Places bears witness to these Truths (b), (b) Isa. 57. that God takes pleasure in the humble, that he looks 15. & 62. upon a broken Spirit, and that his Inclination is to- 2. wards mean and low Things; and that Pride, Self- Pf. 138. 6. will, and Haughtiness displease him, Such therefore 1 Pet. 5. is the Good-pleasure and Will of God, and is far 15. enough removed from that unjust, inconstant, cruel and malicious Caprice, which Men seem to take mighty Pains to hide under the Name of the Divine Good-pleasure and Will,

(4.) The



(4.) *Men confound the real and productive Cause of Grace with the admmissive.*

(4.) The *fourth* Source of the Faults Men commit when they bring Places of Scripture to maintain the Doctrine of personal and absolute Predestination, is, their confounding God's Act, which is the productive and efficient Cause of Grace, with the Act of the Liberty of the Creature, which is but an admmissive, and not a productive and efficient Cause of Good. I will explain my self. The Scripture in divers Places considers the saving Effects or Graces; with relation to their Cause that has produced the Reality of them; and then it says, that God is the Cause of them and not Man. And what have they concluded from hence? Why, that Men were not free to admit or not to admit God's Grace. Wherefore? Because Grace depends upon God only and not on Man. Yes, that is very true: Grace depends upon God only as the productive and efficient Cause of it; but the Admission or Rejection of it are quite different things from the productive Cause of it; and so the Admission and Rejection of it may depend, and indeed do, upon Man, God having been pleased so to ordain, and 'tis upon this Supposition only that the Scripture speaks, and which it expressly confirms in an hundred Places.

*Example and Application.*

(a) Rom. 9. 16.

(b) 1 Cor. 4. 7.

When for Instance, this Place is alledged (a); *It is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*; or this (b), *Who maketh thee to differ from another*? Men do not sufficiently take notice of what I but now observed. They fancy that by the first of these Passages the Scripture teaches us that it does not depend upon the the Will or Endeavours of Man to admit, or not to admit the Grace of God; but here is no such thing intended. The Scripture designs only to let us see, that it is neither our Will nor Endeavours that produce divine Grace in us; just as if a Man *wou'd* be enlightened, and to that Intent *ran* into the Sun; if upon that he did enjoy the Light, it is still true that this Light depends *neither upon him that willeth nor on him that runneth* but upon the Sun that gives the Light; and shou'd any Man fancy he must needs be enlighten'd by virtue and strength of his *willing* or his *running*, 'tis certain he *wou'd* deserve to have the Sun deny him his Light: as the Sun of Righteousness does to such as make his Divine Illumination depend

depend on their *willing* or *running*, which depends solely on him that *sheweth* Mercy and Grace.

And thus also must the second Passage be understood; it is God alone that is the productive Cause of those Gifts and Graces that make one Man differ from another: *What hast thou that thou hast not receiv'd* from God the Author and Giver of it? But this is not to say that Man has not the Liberty to make himself differ from another in quality of an admittive or non-admittive Cause. On the contrary, this is what is properly and solely Man's Duty and within his Power. I omit to mention a great many more Examples of this kind as easily I might.

(5.) *Lastly*, a fifth Spring of wrong Interpretations of Scripture Passages brought to prove the Point in question, is, Men's confounding the outward Means of God's Calling, or the outward Call, with the inward Call, which God gives to every Soul by the Operations of his Grace. Hence, for Example, when the Scripture says, *That God has not shewn his Statutes unto other Nations, as he did to Israel; and that therefore the Heathen had not the knowledge of his Laws* (a): 'tis inferr'd, that God not being pleas'd to give the Means of Salvation to the Heathen, nor to call them, it was his Will and Pleasure likewise not to save them. But this Conclusion is not right. All that shou'd be thence inferr'd, is, that God for just Reasons, wou'd not administer to them the outward Means as he did to the Jews; so that they knew not those Statutes of God that were peculiar to the Jews; but it by no Means follows that they knew nothing of God by the inward Light, and that he was not willing to save them, nor ever tried to do it by the Operations of this Divine Light in their Interior. The Truth of this has been shewn at large in another Place (b).

These Five general Observations upon the Springs of the wrong Senses put upon Passages of Holy Scripture, do at the same time point us out so many general Ways of solving the Difficulties that arise from such places. Yet there are some still behind, the Explication or Solution of which must, it shou'd seem, be taken from some other Considerations. This is one of them.

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(5.) Men  
confound  
the Admini-  
stration  
of outward  
Means  
with in-  
ward.

(a) Psal.  
147. 19,  
20.

(b) Oec.  
of the  
Restor.  
before  
the Inc.  
Cap. 6, 7,  
8, 9, & 13.

III. An  
Explicati-  
on of a Pas-  
sage out of  
Proverbs.

(a) Prov.  
21. 1.

(b) Gal. 2.  
20.

(c) Oec.  
of Co-op.  
chap. 2.  
§ 15.

(d) See a-  
bove Chap.  
10. § 3.

III. To shew that Man has not the Liberty to dispose of the Motions of his Heart, or at least, that God disposes it after an irresistible and physically certain Manner, they bring this Passage of *Solomon*. (a) *The King's heart is in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water, and he turneth it whithersoever he pleases.* But there is no necessity for the Explication of this Place to have recourse to God's preventing and irresistible bending of the Heart to turn it from Evil to Good; which would plainly destroy Liberty. Suppose we then that *Solomon* speaks here of a pious King, or of a King in a mystical Sense, that is, of a faithful Soul that has got the Dominion over her own Passions, and has entirely resign'd her self up to God. It is then clear, that God bends her Heart which way he pleases; because such a Soul has given up her Liberty to God, and consents God should do with her what he will, as *St. Paul* said. 'Tis no more *I that live, but Jesus Christ that lives in me* (b). But this is what is no way against my Sentiments upon Liberty, as may be seen elsewhere (c); for I hold that God does determine and govern our Liberty when it is willing he should, and resigns it self up to him.

But if we suppose this King that *Solomon* speaks of to be a wicked one, the Sense of the place will be this, either that God gives wicked Kings such good Motions and Inspirations as he shall think fit, yet without taking from them their Liberty to follow or reject them; or rather, these corrupt Hearts being not willing to give way to these Inspirations so as to be converted by 'em, and being likewise envenom'd Fountains of Waters that would overflow on all sides and make general Devastations; God throws up Banks against them on some sides, and lets them rowl on on others as he will: which makes nothing for a physical Determination of our Liberty (d). Add to this, that in Matters of outward Management God may an hundred ways bend or turn the Heart towards some certain outward Objects or towards others: for he may dispose of both the Objects and Circumstances, and of the Motion of the Blood and Spirits, the Impressions of which how changeable and inconstant soever they be, the Soul does habitually and of custom follow. But in the Matter of Conversion, as the Motions to it must be pure, spiri-  
ritual.



ritual, and divine, and there being as yet in the Soul no habit or custom of following such Motions, but the Instincts of Flesh and Blood, and many evil Habits against her so doing; it is evident, that let God give her what Motions he will, yet the Soul has still so much Freedom left her to resist, that most commonly and ordinarily she effectually does so, nor is she carried whither God would have had her. Nor is it in this Sense that Solomon says *God turns the King's heart*; for if it were, none would resist God; and all would be convert and saved; *for it is not his will that any should perish.*

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IV. Another place that is produc'd to shew that God wills not the Salvation of all Men, nor that all should have Faith but only those that are by him predestinated to Life, is that of the *Acts*, where it is said that after St. Paul had preach'd the Gospel, (a) *those*, of his Hearers, *that were ordain'd to Eternal Life, believ'd.* I have nothing to say upon this after what has been already observ'd by others, that it should have been translated, *those that were dispos'd towards Eternal Life, believ'd*; that is to say, such as were seriously and heartily dispos'd to seek and to work out their Salvation, they saw and acknowledged the Truth of what the Apostle said and embrac'd it. 'Tis of this Ordination and Disposition of Heart that *Jesus Christ* says, (b) *If any Man will do the will of him that sent me, he shall know my Doctrine.* Now what does this make for them, who would hence conclude, that God's Will is to give Eternal Life but to some, and that he gives Faith only to this small Number of the predestinate?

IV. *Explanation of a Passage in the Acts.*

(a) *Acts*  
13. 48.

(b) *Jo.* 7.  
17.

## C H A P. XV.

*The Design of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, taken in Nineteen Propositions. An Abridgment of the Eight first Chapters.*

*The Epistle to the Romans the chief Pre-text for Predestination.*



IT must be own'd on all Hands that the main Fort. if not the only one of those that hold Predestination, in that Sense wherein we have hitherto oppos'd it, is the Ninth Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, with part of the Eighth, Tenth, and Eleventh. So that if we can but satisfy them here without having recourse to their Hypotheses, they will be oblig'd to confess that nothing in the whole Scripture makes for them: for whatever other Passages may be alledg'd, they cannot be so strongly urg'd as some of this Epistle. I will therefore endeavour to give some Satisfaction in this Matter; and not only that, but also to give a short View of this whole Divine Epistle, which will serve to verify the whole Body of the Theological System propos'd in the preceding Treatises. I shall content my self in one Word to note things only, without any further enlarging upon them.

As common and as true as the Opinion is, that this Epistle of St. Paul, is a compleat System of Divinity, the true Interpretation of it is as rare and as uncommon. Every one makes different Comments upon it according to the divers Prejudices they are in. I cannot do better than not think at all on what has been written on it; but seek out of my self, with God's Grace, the true Sense of it, as I am used to do upon all Occasions, always considering things in my Interiour as in the Presence of God, not regarding what others or my self may have formerly thought of them.

*The design of this Epistle in nineteen Propositions.*

To understand well the Order and Distribution of this admirable Epistle, it must be noted that the whole Aim and Scope of it is comprehended in certain Verses or Propositions scattered and frequently resumed by the Apostle through the whole Body of the Epistle; and

and that what lies between two or more of these Ver-  
ses or principal Propositions, are either Explications  
or Amplifications of them, or some Difficulties or Ob-  
jections that fall in his way, which the Apostle an-  
swers as he goes along, and so proceeds from one prin-  
cipal and capital Truth to another. This I take to be  
the Plan of this Epistle, which I am about to set down  
in Propositions, that shall afterwards be each of them  
resumed and briefly considered to shew their Conne-  
xion, their Incidents, and true Sense.

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I. *Proposition the first.* I Paul intend to preach unto  
you, both Jews and Greeks that are at Rome, the Gos-  
pel of Jesus Christ, which is a powerful Means made  
use of by God to save those that shall receive it by  
Faith. Chap. 1. 14, 15, 16.

II. *Prop.* This Gospel sent from Heaven fully dis-  
covers to Men the Divine Righteousness which must  
be embraced and received by Faith, if they mean to  
be righteous and live for ever: for the Righteous only  
shall live and be saved, and this Life is an Effect of  
Faith, which produces Righteousness. Chap. 1. 17.

III. *Prop.* God has in former Times manifested  
and declared to and in the Heathen the Truth of his  
Righteousness; but they abused it; they wilfully and  
maliciously despised, forgot and perverted it, Chap 1.  
18, 19, 21, 32.

IV. *Prop.* God has likewise manifested this Divine  
Righteousness to the Jews by the Law of the Prophets  
(Chap. 3. 21.) and by other great Advantages. But  
they have gone farther from it than the Heathen.  
Chap. 2.

V. *Prop.* Now, God manifests to all, Jews and  
Gentiles promiscuously, the Truth of his Divine Right-  
eousness by another Way than by the Light of Na-  
ture and of the Law, viz. by the Faith of Jesus Christ;  
whom he has appointed to that Purpose that every one  
that shall partake of his Blood by Faith, may be made  
Righteous by the Grace of God, who will shew forth  
and confirm his Righteousness in such a one by blot-  
ting out and making to disappear (ἀπὸ τῆν πᾶρεσσιν) his  
former Sins, and by declaring that at present such a  
Person is Righteous and by him justified. Chap. 3.  
21, 22, 23, 24, 25.

VI. *Prop.*



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VI. *Prop.* 'Tis by Faith, and not by the Works of the Law that Man receives the Righteousness of God. Chap. 3. 27.

VII. *Prop.* Those that are justified by Faith are restored to Peace with God. Chap. 5. 1, 2.

VIII. *Prop.* This Peace is so solid, that Tribulations cannot shake it, as being an Effect of God's Spirit, which was given us by the same Love through which the Son of God was delivered up for us; that he might make Grace and Righteousness more abound in all those that partake of him through Faith, than *Adam* made Sins and Unrighteousness to descend on all those that partake of him by the Birth they draw from him. Chap. 5. 3, 5, 8, 17, &c.

IX. *Prop.* The Justified, upon their Death unto Sin, are regenerated by the Spirit of God, are the Sons of God, and in this Quality shall be Heirs of his Glory, but yet upon condition that they suffer in this World, as *Jesus Christ* did. Chap. 8. 2, 4, 9, 10, 16, 17.

X. *Prop.* The Gentiles have been admitted to Righteousness by Faith without the Works of the Law: but the *Israelites* having sought this Righteousness of God, and the Adoption to be his Sons, by the Works of the Law, and not by Faith, have been justly rejected of God, and fallen from their Pretensions, without God's doing any thing therein against his Promises, and his equitable Justice. Chap. 9. 6, 14. 31.

XI. *Prop.* The Righteousness of God is not tyed to the Letter of the Law, nor to any external Observances; but to *Jesus Christ*, who is the inward Light, Voice, and Word in the Heart of all Men. Chap. 10. 4, 5, 18.

XII. *Prop.* The *Israelites* are not absolutely and for ever rejected of God. But when they shall submit to the Faith in Vacuity and Humility of Heart, God will again take them into his Favour. Chap. 11. 1, 25.

XIII. *Prop.* It shall one Day really come to pass that all the Jewish Nation shall be converted to the Righteousness of God by the coming of *Jesus Christ*: God having chosen their Fathers to be glorified by their Race. Chap. 11. 26, 27, 28.

XIV. *Prop.* Do not any longer serve God with *Jewish* Worship: but let your Service be *spiritual* and true,  
con-

consisting in a Life holy and consecrated to God. Ch. Chap.  
12. 1. XV.

XV. *Prop.* Practice with Joy, Patience, and continual Prayer, all Sorts of Vertues towards your Brethren, Neighbours, and very Enemies. *Ibid.* 3, &c.

XVI. *Prop.* Submit your selves to the higher Powers out of a Principle of Conscience. Chap. 13. 1, 5.

XVII. *Prop.* Be just and charitable to all. Ch. 13. 7, 8.

XVIII. *Prop.* Dispute not with those that are weak and mean well, do not condemn, nor give offence to them in their Weakness, though their Opinions be false: but rather condescend to them, and edifie them in Peace, as was the Practice of *Jesus Christ*. Chap. 14. 1, 3, 15, 19. Chap. 15. 1, 2, 3.

XIX. *Prop.* *Jesus Christ* being a Minister not only of the Jews but of the Gentiles also, and having entrusted me with the Ministry towards the latter, I have discharged my Duty to you, having written freely to you; which I shall continue toward you and towards all by all possible Expressions of Duty. Chap. 15. 8, 9, 15, 16, &c. 30. Chap. 16.

This I take to be the general Plan of this Epistle. I shall now make some Reflexions upon these Propositions as far as shall be necessary to clear them, and as they concern the Subject in hand, and indeed all those Truths I have proposed in the foregoing Tracts; which I will cite as I go along to shew their Conformity with the Doctrine of St. Paul.

Upon the first *Proposition*, it must be observed who they are the Apostle addresses himself to, what he proposes to say to them, and the Nature of it. He designs to speak to *Jews* and *Gentiles*; and therefore it is that he applies himself sometimes to one, as Chap. 1. and sometimes to t'other, Chap 2. and then to both together, Chap. 3. Now he returns to the Jews, prevents their Objections, and answers them, Chap. 4, 7, 9, 10, 11. then to the Gentiles, Chap. 11, 15. He tells them he intends to *preach to them the Gospel*, that is to say, he intends to let them know, that God instead of leaving them in a State of Damnation, in which they naturally are since *Adam's Sin* (as has been seen in the Three first Chapters of the Third (a) Treatise) and into which they are continually plunging themselves

I. *Prop.*  
Whom  
St. Paul  
speaks to,  
his Aim;  
the Nature  
of the Gospel.

(a) Vol. III.

Chap. deeper and deeper by their own Sins, designs to deliver them out of it by *Jesus Christ*, and that therefore the Gospel is stiled the *Gospel of Jesus Christ*, who is the Person that has obtain'd by his Mediation this Deliverance: (agreeably to what has been shewn in the

(a) Vol. Third Treatise (a).

III. Chap. The Nature of the thing St. *Paul* proposes to declare to them, or of the Gospel, is, *that it is the Power of God*, but is such only to *Believers*, or to those that receive it by Faith. Of all the Means God has ever made use of to communicate the Grace of Deliverance to Man, the most powerful is the preaching of the Gospel; nevertheless while Men receive it with their humane Reason only, and let the Ideas and Persuasion of it stick there, it proves inefficacious, weak, and a Letter that kills, and no more than legal Preaching. To be receiv'd and relish'd as savingly living, it must be receiv'd by the Faith of the Heart: then does God powerfully work in the Heart by his Evangelical Grace, and there produces the Operations of *Salvation*; and so the Gospel becomes the Power of God to *Salvation to all that believe*: which Truths have likewise been explain'd by me in the Sixth, Seventh, Eighth and Ninth Chapters of the forecited Treatise.

What the Righteousness of God is, which the Gospel proposes. II. Prop. In the second Proposition, which is taken out of Chap. 1. v. 17. the Apostle supposes it impossible to enjoy the Deliverance preach'd by the Gospel, but by the Possession of God's Righteousness, which the Gospel does likewise fully declare. This Righteousness is not that Righteousness of God by which he renders to every one according to his Works, (of which I have

(b) Vol. spoken in the Third (b) Treatise) but that we spake of a little lower (c), and which I have largely treated of in the Eighth Chapter of the Co-operation. It is call'd the Righteousness of God, because it is God that is the Author and producing Cause of it, and works it in the Hearts of those that are by Faith resign'd up to him: for Faith is the Means by which the Righteous live, and receive the Operation of God, his Grace, and his Divine Righteousness, which is the Food of his Soul. The same Righteousness is call'd Divine, because it is worthy of God, because it can subsist and stand the Tryal before him. It is a State wherein neither

(b) Vol. 3. Ch. 4. § 6, & 24. Oecon. before the Inc.

(c) Ibid. § 24. n. 2, 3.



ther God nor the Devil can find any thing to blame or condemn (a). This RIGHTEOUSNESS is the main Business of the Gospel.

To save the Reader the trouble of looking any where else than here for the Propositions I make Reflexions upon, I shall repeat them as they come in Order. I cou'd wish likewise he had before him the Text of this Epistle of St. Paul.

III. Prop. God had before manifested and declar'd to the Gentiles and in them the Truth of his Righteousness; but they had abus'd it; they had wilfully and maliciously despis'd, forgotten and perverted it (b).

Reflexions. The Apostle taking it for granted, that God always will'd the Salvation and Deliverance of all Men, shews that he had manifested to their Interiour all that could or ought to be known concerning this Righteousness which God requir'd of them, and which he is willing to work in the Hearts of those that shall with Humility and Self-denial hearken to his Interiour Word (c). So that the Substance of the Gospel was not absolutely unknown to them, tho' but obscurely and imperfectly manifested. It is as clear as the Day, that this is the Truth St. Paul intends to inculcate thro' the whole First Chapter, and in part of the Second and Tenth. Yet, he there shews, that the Generality of the Heathen abus'd this Grace, and Divine Dispensation towards them, excepting some few good Men among them (d). We have shewn the same Truth in our Third Treatise (e), where we have noted, that God intending to try two kinds of Ways to save Men by, the inward and merely natural, and by the positive Revelation, (which was the way he us'd towards the Jews) the Gentiles did not correspond to the way he took with them, saving a very few, who thereby attain'd to the Theory and Practice of the Substance of the Gospel: but that this concludes nothing as to the Generality, who render'd this way ineffectual as to themselves. Now we will see what the others did in their way.

IV. Prop. God manifested likewise to the Jews by the Law and the Prophets (f), and by other great and considerable Righteousness manifested to them by the Law, rejected it and perverted the Law. (f) Rom. 3. 21. and Chap. 10. 4.

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(a) Rom. 8. v. 1. Oecon. of the Co-op. Ch. 8.

The Righteousness of God manifested inwardly to the Gentiles was by them rejected.

(b) Ch. 1. 18, 19, 21, 32, &c.

(c) Rom. 2. 15. and Ch. 10. 8. and 18.

(d) Rom. 2. 10, 14, 15, 26, 27. (e) Vol. 3. Ch. 11. § 14. and Chap. 13.

The Jews having God's Righteous-

Chap. *able Advantages (a) this Divine Righteousness. But they*  
 XV. *forsook it worse than the Gentiles.*

*Reflex.* This is undoubtedly the Sum and Substance of what St. Paul intends through the whole Second, and in the places already noted of the Third and Tenth Chapters. Nor need I insist upon his Amplification of this Matter. But I desire you to remember what I have shewn in the Third Treatise (b), which amounts to this; that Men turning away their Attention from the inward Light of the Heart, God communicated himself to them by Apparitions, Ceremonies, and Revelations, which awaken'd in their Minds the Ideas of that Righteousness, to which they were inclin'd and mov'd by the internal Light of the Heart, and of that Unrighteousness from which it likewise dissuaded them. Thus we see how God gave the Law to lead them and bring them to the inward Light of Faith. But we shall see the terrible and fatal Sophism they committed in this Matter. Instead of turning themselves towards Faith, or towards the inward Light of the Heart, that is to say, towards God himself working in their Interior, that they might obtain by the Divine Power of Faith strength to ratifie, and livingly to fulfil what the Law and the Ideas of it shew'd to be just; they stuck close to their Reason, and went about to fulfill and acquire by their own proper Strength, and by the corrupt Motions of their own Will, the Righteousness which the Law declar'd and exacted of them; and Man's Powers being corrupt and good for nothing, they cou'd not but miscarry and be lost in the Use of them. And so by their own Will, their own Endeavours, and legal Works, they fell from Faith and the true Righteousness of God, and sunk into all manner of Disorders, Darknes and Miseries: as I shall hereafter observe they did, and that almost in every thing.

*God manifests his Righteousness to all by Jesus Christ thro' Faith.* V. Prop. Now God declares to all, Jews and Gentiles without Distinction, the truth of his Divine Righteousness by another way than by a mere natural Light and the Law, viz. by Jesus Christ.

*Reflex.* The Apostle has shewn from the 21<sup>st</sup>. Verse of the 1<sup>st</sup>. Chapter to the 20<sup>th</sup>. of the 3<sup>d</sup>. that these two Dispensations of God, the one, whereby he left the Gentiles

Gentiles purely to the internal Light, and the other, whereby he awakened the Jews by the Ministry of the Law, to bring them back to the Righteousness of God, proved ineffectual; and that the Jews were resolved to practice the Law by their own corrupt Reason and Strength, and not by Faith. And therefore, he says, that God *now* opens a (a) new Period or Dispensation to make known to them *his Righteousness*, the very same Righteousness which the Law and the Prophets declared to them speculatively (b). That God manifests it by the faith of Jesus Christ (*διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, v. 22.) that is to say, by such a Faith by which Jesus Christ lives in us, (as he explains himself in another Place) (c). By a Faith of the same Nature with that of Jesus Christ, by a Faith which being the Faith of the Son of God, and being the true Light, does in us what it did in him, makes us mortify and sacrifice the old Man, and makes us present our selves Oblations to God. For (to continue the Proposition in the Apostle's own Terms ver. 23, 24, 25.) *God has constituted Jesus Christ, that whoever partakes of his blood by Faith should be made righteous by his Grace.*

*Reflex.* Faith is always the same under all Dispensations; but it having been ill treated among the Gentiles and Jews, God renews it and proposes it in his Son where it is efficacious, active, living and incorruptible. Now the Faith of God wrought in Jesus Christ the Sacrifice of himself. And this is what God proposes to us: a Conformity and real Participation of the Sacrifice and Blood of Jesus Christ by Faith, or a Faith that renders us Partakers by Conformity and real Influence of the Sacrifice and Blood of Jesus Christ. When we wholly resign our selves up to it we are redeemed and delivered from all Unrighteousness, and to use the Apostles Words, (ver. 24.) *God declares and makes visible in us his divine Righteousness, in causing to pass away* (I remember I have elsewhere (d) given another Signification to this Word but as this seems to me more agreeable to the Sense of the Apostle, I prefer it before the first) and disappear, *the former Sins that he had tolerated in us; and this manifests that God is Righteous and a Lover of Righteousness and Purity; and that he makes righteous by the Operation of his Grace*

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(a) See the  
fifth Peri-  
od. Oec.  
after Jesus  
Christ, Ch.  
1, &c.

(b) Rom.  
3. 21.

(c) Gal. 2.  
20.

*What it is  
to be justi-  
fied by  
Faith in  
the Blood  
of Jesus  
Christ.*

(d) Oec.  
of Co-op.  
Ch. 8. § 7.



Chap. XV. all such as resign themselves up to the Faith of Jesus Christ sacrificed and crucified for us. I have elsewhere explained what concerns the Blood (a) and Sacrifice (b) of Jesus Christ, and how it justifies (c): and I beg all those that are heartily concerned for Things of such great Importance to consider what is there said.

(a) Oec. of Co-op. Ch. 5. § 12. before the Inc. of Jesus Christ, Ch. 17. § 11. n. 13, 16, 17, 18.

(b) Oec. of the Co-op. Chap. 8.

It is by VI. Prop. It is by Faith and not by the Works of the Faith and Law, that Man receives the Righteousness of God (d).

not by the Reflex. This is the Apostle's main Conclusion, nor Law that can any thing be clearer to any one that does but understand the Terms of it. The Righteousness of God, or we receive the Righteousness of God. that righteous State wherein there is no longer any thing that deserves Condemnation, is gratuitously wrought by God in Man through Faith, through the in-

(d) Rom. 3. 27. ward and operative Light of the Son of God in the Heart, and not by the Works of the Law, by the carnal Endeavours of a Soul that without Self-resignation to God, only consults and makes use of its own corrupt Powers, Activity and Will and its own barren Speculations and therewith thinks, to satisfy God and the Law.

The Apostle shews that this way by Faith excludes Pride (ver. 26) *where is Boasting?* and in the second Place, that it satisfies the Law of God, *establishes* it, (ver. 30.) and even *fulfils* it (Chap. 8, ver. 4.) The Apostle in the fourth Chapter confirms his Doctrine from the Example of *Abraham*. As I intend not a Comment upon this Epistle, but only some Remarks on the Design and capital Propositions of it, I shall say nothing on this Amplification of the Apostle's. He that understands what I have here said, as well as elsewhere concerning Justification and Faith, will with great Satisfaction observe how Faith acts in all the Apostle says concerning *Abraham*, who through it entered into a State of Righteousness well pleasing to God, not only in quality of a particular faithful Person, but also as a Father of the Faithful, and as an elect and chosen Stock from which the Race of Saints was to be perpetuated.

We may hence observe that there is an *Election* to the Quality of a particular faithful Person or Son of God, and to the Quality of a faithful Head, and Father of the Faithful; (in Virtue of which Election God will one day convert the Jews when they come to know themselves and acknowledge their Error) in like manner that there is also a *Righteousness* requisite to make one simply a faithful Person and a *Righteousness* required to qualify one to be a Father of the Faithful, but that they all proceed from Faith. Go we on to the next.

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VII. Prop. *Those that are justified by Faith have Peace with God* (a).

Justification is solid with Peace.

Reflex. This Peace follows not only the real Righteousness which God has wrought in Man by the Light of the Faith of *Jesus Christ*; but also, and chiefly, it follows the Declaration that God has made in the Soul that it is righteous in his Divine eyes. This Matter I have explain'd in the Eighth and Ninth Chapters of the Co-operation.

(a) Rom. 5 1, 2.

VIII. Prop. *This Peace is so solid that Tribulation cannot ruffle it, &c.* (b).

This Peace is solid

Reflex. The Apostle reckons among the Effects of this Divine Peace an undaunted Confidence and Firmness in the Midst of Tribulations, for this Reason, because God loves those that are justified, and has given to them the Spirit of Love, ver. 6. and because he had even before they were justified given *Jesus Christ* for Sinners, ver. 8, by whom all that are in him by Faith are much more reconciled to God and more abundantly filled with Righteousness and Grace, than those that are in *Adam* are shut up in Enmity with God in Unrighteousness, Sin and Death.

and of Proof, being the Effect of the Grace of God which is more abundant and strong upon such as are in *Jesus Christ*, than Evil is upon such as are in *Adam*.

Hereupon he draws a Parallel between the Gift of Righteousness which they that are in *Jesus Christ* partake of, and the unhappy Natural and Adamical Gift of Sin and Condemnation which all they partake of that are still in *Adam* and in the old Birth which they derive from him. A Truth this that I have treated of in the Oeconomy of Sin Chap. 15, 16, 17.

(b) Rom. 5 3, 5, &c.

In the Sixth and Seventh Chapters the Apostle answers a Difficulty that came in his Way. He had said (Chap. 5. ver. 20.) that the Law having discovered

The subject Matter of the sixth and seventh

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the Abundance of Sin, Grace shewed its Abundance in the Justified proportionably as Sin had before abounded in them, and indeed more. Upon which it is objected. What then? *shall we sin on, that Grace may shew how abundant it is?* Chap. 6. ver. 1. which Objection he answers many Ways.

*First* he shews that this Objection contradicts it self or its own Supposition. For (ver. 2.) a justified Person is entirely dead to Sin. Now it is a Contradiction for him to be dead to it and yet to live still in it.

*Secondly*, he proves the same Thing from Baptism of which they that are justified were Partakers. He says (ver. 3, 4, and 5.) that by it they are dead to the old Life and are raised again in the new.

In the *third* Place, he insists upon this, (ver. 6, 7.) that to be justify'd, it is first necessary that the Old Man. the System of Sin, be antecedently destroy'd, none being *declar'd righteous* and absolv'd *from Sin*, but *he that is dead to it*, ver. 7.

*Lastly*, He shews the Absurdity of that Objection from the Consideration of the State of Liberty or Slavery we are reduc'd to by obeying either God or Sin.

He carries the same Difficulty yet further in the Seventh Chapter, and seems to be pleas'd with a thorow canvassing and removing of it, to live without sinning being the chief and principal Business of Christians. He shews the Jews how they formerly adhered to the Law, to the fruitless Theory of Good and Evil, and to their own Strength and Wills in what is prescrib'd, as a Woman sticks to her Husband: and that there was no Reason to marvel, that the impotent Law could not then beget any thing in their carnal Souls but the Fruits of Death and Sin. But their Husband (the Law) being now dead with respect to them, and they to it; and seeing they, (according to the Permission even of their own Law) had espous'd another Husband, *Jesus Christ*, it would be Adultery in them still to bring forth the Fruits of Sin which would again subject 'em to the Bondage of the Law, by leaving and forsaking the living and new Spirit of Faith. Then he takes away an Objection which might be made as if he spake dishonourably of the Law (ver. 7.) and shewing to the End of the Chapter the Use of the Law, and of what Service



Service it is to one that has a mind to attain to a State of Righteousness, he lets us see how he himself proceeded, and the different Degrees he pass'd through to arrive at Justification and Regeneration. I have explain'd this elsewhere (a), and so ends the Seventh Chapter. The following Proposition belongs to the Eighth.

IX. Prop. *The Justified are upon their death unto Sin, born again through God's Spirit, and are his Children; and in that Quality shall be Heirs of his Glory, but yet upon Condition that they suffer in this World as Jesus Christ did (b).*

Reflex. The Apostle shews here admirably well (ver. 1. to the 13th.) how such as are justified sin no more, nor live after the Flesh, nor set their Affections on the things of the Flesh; but that on the contrary they have the Affections, Motions and Works of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, by which they livingly accomplish that Righteousness which the Law coldly declar'd and fruitlessly requir'd of carnal Persons. This has been explain'd in the Treatise of the Co-operation (c). Then he says (ver. 15, &c.) that those that are justified *having receiv'd the Holy Spirit*, are thereby regenerated and become the *Sons of God*, and as such are introduced into the *Inheritance of all God's Goods*; but that before they are glorified, they must suffer.

Those that are like to suffer need something to hearten them up and encourage them. The Apostle does this from many Heads. 1. *First*, by comparing the Glory which will follow their Sufferings, which Glory is such that all the Creatures pant after it. Upon this, he reveals (ver. 20.) this great Secret, that Men have so little thought of, that all Creatures were created in that glorious State to which they shall at last be restored, and that it was the Sin of Man only that covered them with Darkness and subjected them to Corruption; that they have still within them (ver. 21.) a Spring and Principle that presses to be delivered, and to throw off this corrupt Matter; and that (ver. 22.) they shall actually do it as soon as the Sons of God shall be delivered from their Corruption and re-instated in the Liberty of their primitive Glory, after which they earnestly breath and sigh, waiting that as their

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(a) Oec.  
of Co-op.  
ch 9. § 43.

Those that  
are justifi-  
ed are born  
again, and  
come to the  
Divine In-  
heritance,  
but thro'  
Sufferings.

(b) Chap.  
8. v. 2, 4,  
9, 10, 16,  
17.

(c) Ch. XI.

Consolati-  
ons for such  
as are to  
suffer.

Souls

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Souls are already redeemed from the Sins they had contracted, till their Bodies too be redeemed from that corruptible and gross State brought upon them by Sin, before which they were in the Liberty of Glory, I have given the System of this great Truth through the whole Treatise of the Oeconomy of the Creation, and in another Place besides (a).

(a) Oec.  
before  
the Inc.  
of Jesus  
Christ, ch.  
2. n. 10.

In the *Second* Place the Apostle comforts the Children of God as to their Sufferings, from this Consideration, that the Desire which they have of Glory shall not be frustrated, forasmuch as the *Spirit* of God himself is concerned in that Desire of theirs, and does it self pray and ask in them and *for them what Man cannot comprehend, and what is pleasing to God* (ver. 26.)

*Lastly*, he comforts them (ver. 28.) by the Consideration, that *all that befalls them shall turn to their good, because they love God*, and God will on his Part answer their Love by all Care of them imaginable, and by all Expressions of his fatherly Kindness. Upon this Head he goes on to the End of the Chapter, explaining and shewing God's Perseverance towards us, provided we on our Part continue and persevere in our Love towards him (ver. 27.). These Things I have explained in the Tenth Chapter of the Treatise of Co-operation.

An Explan-  
ation of  
the 28th.  
and 29th.  
Verses.

There is some Difficulty in the 28th and 29th Verses, where the Apostle speaks of Predestination. For at first Sight Men think they see in them an absolute and personal Predestination to Faith, or Salvation, according to their preconceived Notion of the Matter. Nevertheless the Apostle had no such Thing in his Thoughts, neither here nor any where else. The true Sense of these Words which depends on the 27th. Verse is this.

To comfort God's Children he tells them, that *all Things*, even their very Afflictions *turn to their good, because they love God* and that they do not fall into Dangers and Afflictions through their own imprudent and ill Conduct, but that God engages them in them by his Providence, by his calling them thereto upon some special Design of his, Which Conduct of his they shou'd not think strange, seeing God makes use of Sufferings even after their Justification, as well as before it,

to

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to lead Man into the Death of the old Life, to crucifie and mortifie his old *Adam* in Conformity to the Image of the Suffering *Jesus Christ*: for (ver. 28.) thus God proceeds. His Design is to have Sons and Heirs, and so likewise he determines the Ways by which they shall be made such. These Sons and Heirs *whom he foreknew*, and of whom he formed the general Idea and *Foreknowledge*, before there were actually any such, he from that Time and *before* they were in Being, *destined and ordained* to suffer inwardly and outwardly with *Jesus Christ*, that they might die to the old Man by Conformity to the Image of his Death, and be sanctified by the same Means he was (a) and made like *their elder Brother*. (a) Heb. 2. 10, 11. And *those whom he thus predestinated* and before appointed (b) to Afflictions and Sufferings, he also calls thereto, (b) 1 Thess. 3. 3. and in time effectually engages them in them, so purifying them from their Sins and sanctifying them by Afflictions, after which he *justifies them*, and then *glorifies them*; but always after their having suffered, as he said before ver. 17. The Order of this Procedure I have elsewhere touch'd on (c). (c) Oec. of Co op. Chap. 7. § 1, 2.

The Rest of the Chapter has no Difficulty in it, or if it have you may meet with a Solution (d). (d) Ib. Ch. 10. § 41.

## C H A P. XVI.

*An Explication of the Ninth Chapter of St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans.*



WE are now come to the Ninth Chapter of this Epistle, which is the strong Hold or chief Pretext for a rigid Predestination. With what right we shall see presently. In the mean while consider we the main Proposition of the Chapter which is this,

X. Prop. *The Gentiles have been received into Righteousness through Faith, without the Law: but the Israelites Draught of having sought this Righteousness of God and the Adoption of the Chapsons through the Works of the Law, and not through Faith, ter.*  
have



(a) Ch. 9. have been justly rejected of God and fallen from their Pretensions, God thereby no Way acting either against his Promises or his Equity and Justice (a)

Three things to be consider'd in this Chapter. 1. The State of the Question. 2. An Answer to a Difficulty with regard to God's Truth. 3. To another arising from his Justice.

*Reflex.* This Proposition is a Compend of the whole Chapter, and as that, contains Three principal Members. The *First* contains the State of the Question, and concerns the Rejection of the Jews, and the Receiving of the Gentiles. Of this the Apostle speaks from the 24th. Verse to the End of the Chapter; but chiefly in the 30th. 31st. 32d. Verses. The *Second* Member is an Answer to a Difficulty, whether this may be done saving the Truth of God's Promises, which he treats of from the 6th. to the 13th. Verse. The *Third* is a Solution of another Difficulty, whether this Proceedure be not against the Justice of God, and this is treated of from the 15th. to the 23d. Verse.

*First. The State of the Question of the Ninth Chapter.*

1. The Apostle that he might not offend nor provoke those of his own Nation, does not only make a softening Preface in the five first Verses of this Chapter, but likewise waves the State of the Question and the Conclusion, which was odious to the Jews, it being about the casting of them off and Admision of the Gentiles, to the End of the Chapter, ver. 30, 31, and 32. *What shall we say then? That the Gentiles who sought not after Righteousness (by the Works of the Law) have obtained Righteousness, I say, the Righteousness that comes by Faith. But that Israel seeking the Law of Righteousness (the Principle that makes us righteous) has not attained the Law of Righteousness. Wherefore? Because they did not do it by Faith, but as desigining to obtain it by the Works of the Law.*

These Words plainly note 1. the State of the Question, viz. whether it were true that upon the Gentiles their being received to Righteousness, the Jews were fallen from it. 2. The Apostle's Conclusion (that so it was) back'd with his Reasons for it, one, that the Gentiles had submitted to the Way of Faith, and had not adhered to that of Works; and the other, because the Jews wou'd needs stick to the way of Works to attain Righteousness, and not take the way of Faith. Whence it follows, that they justly fell from their Pretensions

tensions of being Righteous, and the Sons and Heirs of God, when as the Gentiles were admitted to these very Prerogatives.

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It appears as clear as the Day from the reading of this Chapter, especially from the Ten last Verses of it, from the Tenth Chapter and the Eleventh, and from the Eleventh Verse of it to the Thirty first, that in the first Place, this is the State of the Question and the Subject treated of; and that St. Paul never thought here (no more than any where else) of any pretended absolute and personal Predestination of certain Individuals some to Life and others to Death Eternal, without any regard to the different Dispositions and Carriage of such Persons. This appears to be so, in the second Place, because neither the Jews of those Times, nor of ours, ever pretended to such a Predestination, nor do they yet know any thing of it; nor did they ever make this the Matter of any Difficulty against the Gentiles, or ever held that the Gentiles were reprobated by any pretended absolute Decree. This Observation alone, which cannot be doubted, is enough to overthrow all the pretended Proofs Men fancy they see in this and the following Chapters of an absolute Predestination. But very unfortunately for that Doctrine, St. Paul never so much as thought of it, and in this Epistle and the Ninth Tenth and Eleventh Chapters of it, which are alledged in its behalf, he is treating of quite another thing.

*St. Paul never so much as thought of a rigid Predestination.*

Men fancy that the Question here is to know, whether certain particular Persons are from Eternity predestinated of God, some to Life and others to Death Everlasting; and that in Consequence of this, the Means of Salvation be not designed and reach'd out to the one, and were never intended for the other. And they believe that so it is. And this God's dealing they ground upon a mere good Pleasure of his that has no regard to any Difference in the Persons; and this is what they look to find in St. Paul.

*Men put a different Question in the room of St. Paul's.*

Whereas St. Paul's Intent is to shew, how God having at first tryed to save all Men, Jews and Gentiles by the way of true Righteousness, after having drawn the Gentiles to it by the Light of Nature, and the Jews by the Law, and then both together by the Preaching of

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of the Gospel ; how it fell out that the Gentiles were by God admitted to this Righteousness and the Prerogatives of it, which were to become the Children and Heirs of God ; and that the Jews were excluded and cast off from all these Advantages. And the Apostle's Answer to this is, that, the Reason of this different Treatment of the Jews and Gentiles, and of the different Way of God's dealing with them is grounded upon this, that the one to come to what they were, proceeded *by* the way of *Faith* ; but that the other instead of endeavouring after Righteousness *by Faith*, wou'd needs attain it *by the Works of the Law* (a). And is not this an infinitely different thing from a rigid Predestination ? Is it not perfectly opposite to it ? and does it not even overturn and ruine the very Foundation of this chimerical Fancy, *viz.* the pretended Good-pleasure of God that has no regard to the difference of Mens Dispositions and Behaviour ?

(a) Rom.  
9. 30, 32.

And I might stop here and rest satisfied with this Truth that overthrows the Foundation of all the Difficulties and Glosses that are put upon the following Texts of the Apostle : to which may be added the Explication I have already given of some of these Verses (b) ; and also what has been said of the Plan of the Election and Reprobation of the Jews (c), as well as of the Gentiles with respect to what St. Paul teaches concerning this Point in the Ninth, Tenth, and Eleventh Chapters of this Epistle. I desire those places may be consulted ; for though I intend to make some Reflexions as well upon the following Texts of the Apostle, as upon the rest of my Propositions, yet I shall not designedly explain some things which I suppose already clear'd.

(b) In the  
Oec. of  
Sin, Ch.  
2. § 3, 4.

(c) In the  
Oec. be-  
fore Je-  
sus Christ,  
Chap. 15.  
§ 19.

(2.) The  
second part  
of this  
Chapter :  
a Difficulty  
in relation  
to the Truth  
of God.

(2.) The Apostle having ver. 4. and 5. own'd the Advantages of the Israelites, that the Adoption of Sons, the Glory of being God's People, the Covenant of God often renew'd with them, the Law, and the Ceremonies and all the Promises of God were all their peculiar Privileges. and at the same time teaching that God had rejected them from being his Children and truly Righteous, and from effectually enjoying his Promises, answers (ver. 6.) this Objection, that then the

Word



Word and Promises of God wou'd be deceitful and changeable.

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He answers no, they wou'd not : and the Reason he gives for it is this, that altho' God made his Promises generally to *Israel* and to *Abraham's* Race ; yet was it not his Will to mean, own and chuse for *Israelites* and *Abraham's* Seed such as were carnally so, and who from a presumptuous Conceit of this Advantage and of all the other of Laws, Revelations, and Worship, shou'd pretend that by virtue of this and of their own busying themselves and Thoughts about these Matters God must necessarily own 'em and take 'em for his Children and for righteous Persons, and use 'em as such. No, this was none of God's Pleasure nor his Intention. And why was it not ? Because God being the *God of the Heart*, and of the spiritual, humble and clean Heart ; he cannot take Pleasure in Hearts that are carnal, proud, and cleaving to self, He cannot fix neither his Grace nor his Delight in such, neither by *Promise*, nor in Effect. But his Pleasure, his Will, his Decree, is, not to mean nor own for *Israelites*, not to take for *Abraham's* Seed, not to hold, chuse or declare to be his People, his Children, and Righteous, any but those only whose Hearts were humble and full of Faith, and so were the true Children of *Abraham* according to the Spirit. Such is God's good Pleasure, and this is his Decree of Election to Righteousness, to Adoption, and to the effectual partaking of his Promises. Nor must any pretend to thrust themselves into a Right to them, by following his own Way and Will, how Good and Holy soever he may fancy it ; but must submit to God's good Pleasure, upon which all depends, as on its only Reason and Cause.

Who the true Children of Abraham are, and the *Israelites* to whom the Promises were made.

Now (ver. 7.) all this was clear from the very first, in the two first Children *Abraham* had ; for God having promised this Patriarch to make use of him and his Posterity as Vessels and Conduits of his Graces, as well for themselves, as by them to perpetuate and communicate them to others ; *Ismael*, the Son of the Bond-woman and the Scoffer, though the carnal Son of *Abraham*, was not for all that accounted his Son ; but *Isaac* the meek and the humble and the Son of the Free-woman was accounted his Seed : to give us to understand

The first Example by which St. Paul proves this Truth. *Ismael* and *Isaac*.

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(a) Gal. 4.  
v. 21, &c.  
and especially, v. 28,  
29, 30, 31.

The second  
Example  
of Jacob  
and Esau.

derstand that God will not own or chuse for his Children, to whom he has promised Righteousness and Grace, but such only who being far from confidently presuming upon their carnal Advantages, and scoffing at the supernatural Grace of God, shall humbly and freely resign up themselves to this pure Grace and good Will of God. The Apostle very clearly explains the same Thing elsewhere (a).

In the 10th. Verse of this Chapter he further evinces this by the Example or Emblem of the Sons of *Isaac* and *Rebeccah*, *Jacob* and *Esau*. For ver. 11. *that the Purpose and Decree of God concerning the Election* which he designed to make and perpetuate in *Isaac's* Race *might be ratified* and accomplished in the foresaid Race; and that it might appear that this was not made by *Virtue of any carnal Prerogatives or Works*, but by the *Virtue and Grace of him that calls and works inwardly*, God before the Birth of the Sons of *Isaac*, and before they had done any thing that might give the one any Advantage over the other, says and makes a Declaration concerning them and their Descendants.

And what was this Declaration? Was it that God wou'd own for his, and wou'd prefer him that adhered most to self, to his Advantages and natural Strength, to his own Skill and Exploits, and that shou'd seem greatest in his own Eyes?

The Election of  
Jacob signifies that  
God chuses those that  
resign themselves  
to his good Spirit of  
Humility and Faith:  
and the Rejection of  
Esau notes that God  
reprobates the Spirit  
of Pride

Far from this: he declares that *the greater*, he that wou'd be presumptuous, self-adhering, and trusting to his own natural Strength and Works, shou'd be *inferiour* postponed before God to *him that was less*, that was loosened from self and resigned to God in Humility.

Thus we see how God declares his Choice of the Spirit of Humility, of Faith and Resignation to him, and that he rejects the Spirit of Pride and Presumption.

Now *Jacob* had such a Spirit of Meekness, Humility, Simplicity and Faith: and *Esau* had a Spirit of Presumption, Grandeur, of Esteem of himself and his own Works, both himself and Posterity. Therefore by Virtue of this Declaration *Jacob* (as likewise all such as wou'd give themselves up to be led by his Spirit) ought to be approved and chosen of God; and

*Esau*

and of corrupt and carnal Nature, and all such as adhere to it.

*Eſau* (as long as himſelf and his Race ſhou'd continue in their Spirit of Corruption and Pride) was to be rejected and paſſed by. And this is what came to paſs. *For the Scripture ſays*, that God loved *Jacob*, the ſimple and the humble of Spirit, and that *he hated* and deſpiſed *Eſau*, the preſumptuous and proud of heart. And this is to be underſtood with Reference to their Perſons as well as to their Poſterity, while they continue in the ſame Diſpoſitions of Heart. For God will never own and chuſe for his Children but only the humble Spirit of *Jacob*, which is the ſame Spirit *Jeſus Chriſt* is of, nor does he reject any but the preſumptuous Spirit of *Eſau*, which is the Spirit of corrupt Nature, and of the very Devil himſelf.

Thus is the firſt Difficulty vaniſhed. For ſince it appears that the Promiſes of God regard only Souls humble and reſigned to the Spirit of his Grace, and not at all ſuch as are preſuming and ſtiſly adhering to their own Activity; it hence follows, that God has not failed in his Promiſes, though the Jews be rejected and the Gentiles received and owned of God: becauſe theſe Jews had the carnal, mercenary, preſumptuous and arrogant Spirit of *Iſmael* and *Eſau*; and the Gentiles abandoned themſelves to the humble and faithful Spirit of *Jacob*, as ſoon as it pleaſed God to manifeſt it to them by the Goſpel.

(3.) We are now come to the third Difficulty in this ſame Procedure of God ver. 14. But how is it? *What ſhall we ſay then?* Does not this look as if there were Unrighteouſneſs in God, thus to make ſerious and general Promiſes to *Abraham*, to *Iſrael*, and to all their Deſcendants, and yet not to keep and make good his Word to thoſe that can effectually make it out to him that they are the true Race of *Abraham* and *Iſrael*? But God forbid we ſhou'd upon this Score ſuſpect him of Unrighteouſneſs!

The Reaſon is this, becauſe God cannot affix his Grace and Mercy to Fleſh and Blood, and much leſs to a preſumptuous Confidence in them; he can annex it only to his own juſt and holy Will, and to ſuch Diſpoſitions as are pleaſing and agreeable to himſelf; for (ver. 15.) *he ſays to Moſes*, *I will have Compaſſion on whom it is my Pleaſure to have Compaſſion, and will ſhew Mercy on*



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*whom it is my Will to shew Mercy ; and not I will shew Mercy on them whom Men shall please to think I ought to shew Mercy, upon Pretence of such and such Dispositions of theirs which themselves are highly pleased with, but which displease me exceedingly. It is their Part to resign themselves up to such Dispositions as are agreeable to my good Pleasure and Will, seeing my good Pleasure and Will are the Fountains and Distributers of my Mercy and Grace.*

*It is not therefore of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that shews Mercy (ver. 16.). To will is good, to run and do is good, when they are used as good Means, and not fancied to be the End, nor pretended that by Virtue of and Adhesion to these Things we are in a State well pleasing to God, otherwise they are a Hindrance. What must make us acceptable to God; and make us Light in the Lord, must come from God himself into us by Faith. Our Acts of willing this, of practising t'other, of being of such a Religion, and excercising the Functions of it, of running to Sacraments, do not of themselves make us pleasing to God : 'tis mere Blindness and Cheating themselves for Men to flatter themselves with these Advantages and Works, unless they deny themselves and throw themselves humbly and purely into the Abyss of God's pure Mercy on which all depends.*

*Even in  
the very  
best of Men,  
and in  
Conversion,  
Non  
est volens  
neque  
currentis,  
sed  
Dei misericordis.  
How this  
is.*

*This Truth is palpably manifest in such as are truly converted to God : for first, they are full of good Wills, they run, they act, they do all they can, and all they think proper and most effectual to their Conversion ; and yet after all, they find they do not advance at all, and they seem even to go backwards ; and God so permits it that they may know that his Grace which he designs to give them depends not upon their willing, or running. But all on a sudden when they think not of it, and have lost all Hopes of Success in their Endeavours, God pours upon them his Light and his Grace that changes them in an instant in such a Manner to which they contribute so little actively, that they come then plainly to understand the Meaning of this Truth, That it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that shews Mercy.*

This

This is what they likewise experience after another Manner, who with all their *willing* and *running* are re-  
jected of God, as *Eſau* was, though he *wou'd* have had the Blessing of his Father, and though he *ran* and did all he possibly cou'd as far as carnal Means wou'd go, to the obtaining it: but neither his *willing* nor his *running* were pleasing to God, because of his Presumption and Pride. The same befel the *Israelites* who having a good *Will* and a Divine Zeal, and *running* to the Observance of the Law, and even after proselyting others to the Observance of it; yet, they not doing this in a Spirit of Humility and Resignation to the Mercy of God, but in a Spirit of Presumption and Self-adhesion; neither their *willing* nor their *running* made them acceptable to God? on the contrary, they fell so far into his Disfavour as not to be neglected by him, or rather not to be punished by him after the ordinary Manner wherein he punishes other Sinners and Unbelievers in the World, whom he punishes and leaves to perish in the common Way; but as for them one may say he brings them upon the Stage, exposes and preserves them in the Sight of the World to be the most remarkable Example of his Wrath and severe Vengeance.

(Ver. 17.) Nor is this any such extraordinary Thing with God; on the contrary, he uses thus to dispose of wicked Men, when they continue obstinately impenitent, and are resolved to follow their own corrupt Wills. In this Case Divine Providence orders them in a very singular Manner to manifest his Glory most signally in their Crimes and in their Punishments as we have seen above (a), and the Example of *Pharaoh* speaks home to this Point; the Scripture teaching us that God *said* to him, that instead of leaving him to perish after the ordinary Way, or letting him alone in the common Rank of Sinners, he *would* raise him up to the eminent Rank of an hardened Sinner, and *preserve him alive* so long till he came to that Height of Wickedness as shou'd fit him for such a Vengeance as *should make God's Name be renowned through all the Earth*. In like Manner God preserves the Jews that were obstinately wicked to be a notable Example of his severe Justice, to make himself acknowledged through the

*The same thing happens in the Wicked.*

*How the Will of God justly disposes of such wicked Men.*

(a) Chap. 8. v. 20.

Pharaoh.

Chap. World for a God that loves our humble Resignation  
 XVI. to his Grace, and so utter an Enemy to Presumption,  
 Self-love and all carnal Adhesion to our own Ways, as  
 to punish it in the Race of his dearest Friends after so  
 distinguishing, severe and illustrious a Manner.

(Ver. 18.) Conclude we *then*, that God *has Compassion on whom he will* have Compassion, that is to say, on the humble in Spirit, and on such as are resigned to him; and that he gives up to their own *hardening those he thinks good* and just to forsake, viz. the presumptuous, and such as continue obstinate in their carnal and natural Adhesions.

(Ver. 19.) But some will say, if it be true that God will thus dispose of Unbelievers, of presumptuous and obstinate Sinners, and raise them up to be Examples that shall by his severe Usage of them make God's Name famous and known in the World, *why does he yet complain of them, since they cannot resist his Will*, by which he is resolved to use them thus?

*The making of Vessels some to Honour, and some to Dishonour.* (Ver. 20, 21.) But O Man, thinkest thou right, *who art thou that thou shouldest find fault with God's Conduct?* Is he not wise and just to do justly and fitly what he does without incurring thy Censure or that of the World he thus orders and manages. A Work can never justly strive with him that has given it its Form, as earthen Vessels do not contend with the Potter when of the same Lump he makes some for less and others for more honourable Uses. Why therefore shou'd it be thought strange that God shou'd do the same thing with the Jews, some of whom he receives into the Number of his Vessels of Honour and of his Children, and rejecting others of them keeps them alive in so shameful a Manner to be an Example of his Vengeance; though the one and the other are taken out of the same Lump and out of the same Stock of Abraham and Israel?

(Ver. 22.) But that which is taken out of the same Lump was not equally disposed with regard to God; one Part of it gave him just Reason of Complaint and of making thereof Instruments to manifest his just Severity upon. For one Piece of this Mass refusing to give it self up to him or his Call of Mercy, God, after having a long Time born with them in their Disobedience to his Divine Will, which desired their Conversion, and



and having justly found fault with their Rebellion, took out and made of this corrupt and rebellious Mass of *Israel*, which is obstinately resolved to continue and strengthen it self in its *Disposition* for Destruction, *Vessels* wherein to make known his Power, his Name and his *Justice* through all the World in an exemplary Manner. But the other Part of this Mass having forsaken its own Ways and Conduct, and resigned it self up to the Will of its Maker, God took thence and made of it *Vessels of Grace*, in them to make known the Riches of his Glory which he had prepared for them.

(Ver. 24, &c.) And they, this faithful part of the Mass of *Abraham* which is the Matter of the Vessels that God calls and makes to his Glory, are not Jews only that are born of *Abraham* naturally; but also such among the *Heathen* that resign themselves up to the Spirit of Faith and Humility of *Abraham* and *Jacob*. And all this God had foretold by the Prophets, by *Hosea*, and by *Isaiah*, and the fundamental Reason of this whole Procedure, is, because the Jews sought after Righteousness by the way of their own Works, which put them up with Pride and made them stumble against the Humility of *Jesus Christ*, who is a Rock of Offence to the Proud, and to all such as being full of themselves, find nothing more intolerable than the Word of our Saviour, Come unto me, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in Heart.

## C H A P. XVII.

*Reflexions upon the Tenth and Eleventh Chapters, and on the rest of the Epistle to the Romans.*

O we on with our Reflexions on the remaining part of this Epistle of our Apostle, as we shall have Occasion from the Propositions we have formed out of it as an Abridgment of the whole.

*The Righteousness of ty'd to the Letter of the Law, nor to external Things, but to God is as- fix'd to Je- sus Christ who is the inward Word, Voice and Light of all Hearts.* XI. Proposition is this. *The Righteousness of God is not Jesus Christ, who is the inward Light, Voice and Word in the Hearts of all Men (a).*

*Reflex.* This Proposition contains the principal Matter of this Chapter, of which I have but little to say, and that only to shew the coherence of it, having explain'd all the rest elsewhere (b). In the 1st, 2d, and 3d Verses, the Apostle repeats what he had said in the 1st, 2d, 3d, 4th, 5th, 31st, 32d Verses of the Ninth Chapter. He says it was not purely out of Presumption, but partly too out of Ignorance that the Jews fell from the Righteousness of God, because *they knew it not*. They did not sufficiently take notice, that it was an Operation of God's pure Grace in a Soul that acknowledging that all it is, and all it can it self do, is corrupt, and can work nothing but Damnation, empties it self of it self, and gives it self, Spirit and Heart, wholly to God, and suffers the Spirit of God to work what he pleases in her, who must be the Principle and Worker of that Righteousness we are ever like to be Possessors of. Instead of doing thus, they continued full of themselves, and not knowing their their own Impotence, nor the damnable Corruption of their Nature, their Faculties, Understanding and Reason, of their Desires and Endeavours, of their own Ways, Thoughts and Wills; with all this Train of Accomplishments they set upon the Law of God (that commands and prescribes Righteousness)

(a) Chap. 10. 4, 5, 18.

(b) Oec. before the Inc. Ch. 13. § 4.

*True Righteousness is not attain'd by the Law.*

endeavouring to know it and do it of themselves and by their own Activity, and that way that lik'd them best, without renouncing themselves and wholly resigning up themselves passively to God. And by this Means they properly *sought after a Righteousness of their own* making and Fashion; a Righteousness depending on their own corrupt Strength, which busies it self only about the Letter and Formalities of the Divine Revelations. And this was what hinder'd them from giving up themselves to the Righteousness which God only works inwardly and entirely by the Spirit of *Jesus Christ* in such Souls as resign themselves to him with Contempt and Abnegation of themselves and of their own polluted and sickly Powers.

(Ver. 4.) *For Jesus Christ*, when we thus partake of him, *is the fulfilling of the Law, and the End* at which it aim'd; who will make *righteous all those that receive him* into themselves, by resigning up themselves to him and to his Operations by true Faith. Whereas (ver. 5.) the *Righteousness* which Men would pretend to attain to by conforming to the Law, requires, besides the internal Rectitude, which can be wrought in us only by Faith (a), an exact Observance of all external Things and Formalities; till which is done it cannot be said that Righteousness comes by the way of the Law; seeing by neglecting any of them we have more Reason to fear the Curse of the Law, than hope for Righteousness by it. (a) Rom. 3. 30.

But (ver. 6, 7, 8, and 9.) the pure *Righteousness of Faith* is so inward, so spiritual, and so little depending on any thing without, that it does not so much as require of us to behold *Jesus Christ* corporeally, whose Spirit is the Principle and Worker of it; nor that we see the external Means and Effects of it, and by carnal and sensible Experience know that this Righteousness subsists before God after Death, and makes us Heirs of Eternal Life. The Word of the Heart, which is the inward Word of Faith, and the Substance of what we preach and say, supplies all this, and is that which saves us.

For (v. 9.) if the Confession of *Jesus Christ* that is made by the Mouth be true, so that you have within you really and livingly what you say, and your Heart embrace by



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an humble and resign'd Faith the Spirit, and the New and Holy Life of Jesus Christ rais'd from the Dead, so that he be risen and living by the Power of the Father in your Heart dead to Sin, and filled with Faith, you shall be sav'd.

For (ver. 10.) thus it is that we believe with the Heart unto Righteousness; thus we become Righteous by the internal Faith and Word of the Heart; and 'tis thus we evidence and confess it outwardly by saving Words and Actions: whereas the outward Confession, which is but dead and Judaical, whether by Words or Ceremonies, not coming from a Heart in which the Spirit of Jesus Christ lives and operates, is not sufficient to Salvation.

(Ver. 12, &c.) And it being God's Design to save all Men, Jews and Gentiles, he proposes to all without difference of Jew and Greek, this same inward Righteousness, which he works by the Spirit of Faith in those that give up themselves to him and call upon him, who is Lord of all, and rich unto all, and will save all that call upon him. Which is what the Heathen might from the beginning very well have known and done, had they but given good heed to the general Voice of God, the sound whereof is gone into the Hearts of all the Men in the World. And the Jews instead of being offended at this, shou'd have expected it, seeing God forewarn'd them by Moses and Isaiah both of the Calling and Reception of the Gentiles, as well as of their own Rebellion, which they should have been afraid of.

*The Rejection of the* XII. Prop. The Israelites are not rejected of God absolutely, but only on Condition of their Infidelity, which ceasing, their Rejection shall likewise have an end.

*ly and for ever; but when they shall submit to the Faith in Israelites* Vacuity and Humility of Heart, God will receive them into his Grace and Favour (a).

*Reflex.* As St. Paul has not hitherto thought of a riged Predestination, so is it yet much easier to observe that he thinks of no such Matter in the whole Eleventh Chapter; and to think otherwise is to make of this Chapter a Chaos of inexplicable Confusion. For if it be maintained that St. Paul does in it speak of Predestination, we shall but make our selves ridiculous in the Explication of the greater Part of the Chapter: for Example, shall Elias complain to God (ver. 3.) of the

Israelites

(a) Chap. 11. v. 1. to the 25.

Israelites being all reprobated by him by an eternal Decree? Wou'd God have said to him that there were left Seven Thousand predestinated to Life Eternal? Shall the Reprobation of the Jews (ver. 11, 12.) be a Means of the Eternal Election of the Gentiles? and (ver. 15.) will a second Eternal Election of the Jews be a Means of another second Election of the Gentiles to Life?

Were the Jews (ver. 17. &c.) cut off from an Eternal Election through their Unbelief as Branches from their natural Stock? and were the Gentiles eternally elected in consideration of their Faith? and shall they be cut off from this Election if they grow proud? and shall the Jews be again ingrafted into it if they continue not in their Unbelief? This is all unintelligible and contrary to their own Hypothesis. So that it must be confessed that the Apostle in all these Places speaks of the Calling and of the actual Admission of Men to be God's Children, and Righteous Heirs of his Goods and of his Grace. And if it be so, how can Men bring into this Discourse of St. Paul's the Matter of absolute Predestination, which they seek after in the 5th. 6th. 7th. and 28th. Verses to the End of the Chapter? I confess I cannot take the Apostle for one that shou'd make so odd a Discourse, so interrupted and broken with Things nothing to the Purpose, and indeed quite opposite to one another. Leave we then these Absurdities, unworthy the Wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and let us say a Word or two concerning the Thread of the Apostle's Discourse,

We have observed already in the Reflexions on the Sixth proposition, and likewise elsewhere (a), that agreeably to what the Apostle says (b) Abraham was elected not only to be one single righteous Person, but to be by Means of his Race the Father of the Faithful, the Means and Channel through which the Righteousness of God shou'd be shed forth upon all the World. This is what God told and promised him. That is to say, that God to make good his Promise will make choice of Abraham and his Race as well in Quality of single righteous Persons as of Instruments to communicate through them his Righteousness to others.

God keeps his Promise to Abraham with regard to the People whom he foreknew.

(a) Oec. of the Restor. before

But the Inq.

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But we have seen how Matters went with the Jews. *Has God therefore* disannulled his Promise of Election, *and has he cast off the People* which he had promised to chuse to be themselves righteous, and to be the Seminary and Root of righteous Persons?

The Apostle (ver. 1.) says he has *not*. And proves it many Ways.

*First*, By the Example of himself, who was chosen and actually receiv'd of God to be made and declar'd Righteous, and to be employ'd as an Instrument to spread his Righteousness through the World.

*Secondly*, He says expressly, that *the People which God foreknew*, that is to say, the People of whom God according to his Pleasure form'd the Idea and Character, the Conditions and Dispositions, and such Qualifications as he lik'd best to fit 'em to be receiv'd unto his Righteousness, this People *is not* nor ever can be *cast away*. God cannot dislike any one of them that shall answer this Idea and these Qualities foreknown of him.

In the *third* Place, he proves, by what happen'd in the Days of *Elias*, that in all Times, (ver. 5.) *the Grace of God promis'd to Abraham* and to his Race, I say the Grace promis'd (and *not Works*, ver. 6.) hath chosen and *elect'd some of those that were left* and not carried away by the Torrent of Presumption and Unbelief, and that all the others wou'd have been chosen too had they but submitted to and acquir'd such Dispositions as God's Election requires in all he admits to Righteousness and Adoption. But that the *Israelites having sought this Righteousness* (ver. 7.) and this Adoption of God by their own Will, Works and Strength (Ch. 9. 32.) *did not obtain it*. The pretended Election they fancy'd God wou'd make of them, to rank them among his Righteous Children by virtue of their own presumptuous Activity, signify'd and got nothing: but *the Election* which God was pleas'd to make of such as were humble and obedient to his Grace by Faith, this Election *did obtain*, stood and was ratified in all those it found to its Mind, and *the rest were left* in their presumptuous, corrupt and miserable State, in which they *harden'd themselves more and more*.



(Ver. 8, 9, 10.) And this beset them with so much Justice, that we must say Amen, and consent, with the Spirit of God, to the Miseries that they have wilfully brought upon themselves, and to all the Evils into which this Divine Justice has left them to throw themselves, after their having refus'd God's Blessing and Grace. For thus we see, that the Spirit of God, that Spirit of Equity and Righteousness, does consent to all this by the Mouth of *David* and the Prophets.

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(Ver. 11, &c. to the 25.) Yet is not the Jewish Nation so absolutely fallen, nor so rejected of God, as never to rise again, and as that God will never chuse any of their Race more to be his People, and his Righteous Sons. Their Unbelief and their Presumption is the Reason of their Rejection, as it will be of the Gentiles if they fall into it. But if the Jews do not continue in their Unbelief God will chuse them and take them in again for his People and will ingraft them as a Branch of a Tree upon the chosen Stock of Abraham, whence they were cut off: and this the rather, because they are already Branches of this Stock which God blessed and sanctified both in it self and in what grew of it, and out of which he has already taken so many Holy Branches, which are as so many Holy First-fruits of what the whole Mass shall one Day be. This is clearly what the Apostle would inculcate all along to the 26th Verse, and is the Matter of our Twelfth Proposition. Come we now to the following Proposition.

XIII. Prop. It shall one Day really come to pass that all the Nation of the Israelites shall be converted to the Righteousness of God by the Coming of Jesus Christ; God having chosen their Fathers to be himself glorified by their Posterity.

The future  
Conversion  
and Re-  
sumption of  
the Jews.

Reflex. The Apostle lays down and proves this Truth many Ways.

First, (ver. 25.) He declares that the hardening of Israel is but in part, or for a time only; and that it shall last but till the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, that is to say, (and this Interpretation seems to me preferable to all others) till the time that all the Nations of the World are to be converted to God. 'Tis well known that above Three Quarters of the World is at present perfectly Heathen: and the Scripture will not

let

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let us question but all the Nations and People of the Earth will one Day be converted and obedient to the Lord. *Isaiah* and the *Psalms* are fill'd with this Truth. Now when this Time shall be at hand and just a coming, when the Nations shall be upon the point of entering into the Church of the Saints, then will the Hardness and Blindness of *Israel* be ended: then shall they be converted and be employ'd as Instruments to convert and bring in the Heathen. For, to use the Apostles Words, for *if the Fall of the Jews has prov'd a Means to enrich the Gentiles* spiritually, and *if their Fall and lessening has been the enriching of the Gentiles*, how much more shall their Fullness be the Riches and the Abundance of the World and of the Nations? And that their Rejection has serv'd to reconcile the World, what will their Reception be but a Resurrection and Renovation of Life to all the World, hitherto plung'd in the Darkness of Death?

Secondly, The Apostle proves the same Truth (ver. 26, 27.) by the Oracles of the Prophets *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, and thence concludes, *that all the Nation of Israel shall one Day be delivered and saved.*

In the third Place he proves it (ver. 28, 29.) from the Nature of the Gifts and Calling of God, which are such as God does not repent of or retract. Now so it is, that God had called their Fathers and had promised and given them the Privilege of being employed, themselves and their Race, by him as Instruments to convey his Blessing to the rest of the World (a). Therefore God will never repent of this, nor retract it: and so the Jews shall yet become just and holy themselves, and shall derive Holiness and Blessing upon all the World.

'Tis true (ver. 28.) at present they are Enemies of the Truth as to the Gospel, and they are the more irreconcilably so, because ye Gentiles, whom they hate, have embraced it. But still this Nation is look'd upon by God with an Eye of Love and Benevolence, because of the Choice and Election which he has made of their Fathers to be by them and their Race glorified through the World. See here plainly the Recalling of the Jews of which I have elsewhere spoken more than once (b).

The

(a) Oec.  
of the  
Restor.  
before

the Inc. Ch. 15. § 8. &amp; 10. Oec. after the Inc. Ch. 10. § 29.

The Apostle to set before us God's wonderful Conduct in all these Matters, shews, that his Divine Providence so interposed and guided their great and manifold Wickednesses and Rebellions as to make the Evil of some instrumental and occasional to the Good of others, and that to the abundant and universal Good: for (ver. 30.) the Jews having become rebellious, were the Occasion of the Calling of and of Grace to the Gentiles, that were before Infidels: and the Jews being at present rebellious occasionally from the Grace that is shewn to the Gentiles, these very Rebels shall be received into Grace upon account of that Mercy that God shall one day pour upon all the Gentiles throughout the whole World: 'tis plain the Apostle's Sense is thus to be fill'd up, and the Greek if well considered evidently points that Way.

For (ver. 32.) *God has shut up all in Disobedience, that he might shew Mercy to all.* This is the Conclusion of this, and of the Eleven first Chapters of this Divine Epistle; and it is the principal Thing he all along intended to remark to us. The Meaning whereof with reference to this Verse is in short this.

All Men having sinned, lost the Glory, the Righteousness and Light of God, are nothing but Abomination, Unrighteousness and Darkness while left to themselves. God designed to deliver them all by means of his Divine Light and Righteousness which he offered inwardly to the Heathen by the Dictates of their Conscience, and outwardly to the Jews by the mighty Advantages of Revelation. The Heathen instead of receiving this Divine Light in an humble and grateful Heart, which wou'd have prepared the Way for the Operation of the Divine justifying Grace, ungratefully contemned it, and wilfully quenched it; and from a Spirit of Presumption betook themselves to the Activity of their humane Reason and of their Imagination, pretending this Way to become wise. But see what God by his Providence did upon this. They being obstinate in their Presumption and Self adhesion, and through the Blindness of their Mind raking this Practice of theirs for Vertues, which are in the Sight of God abominable Vices, God resolved to permit this wilful and obstinate Source of the Corruption of their Heart

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St. Paul's  
main Con-  
clusion.

God's deal-  
ing with  
the Hea-  
then.

to



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to break out into a thousand Kinds of *Sins* so gross, that it wou'd thereby evidently appear that these miserable Wretches were so far from being wise, that they were rebellious and disobedient to the most palpable Lights of Nature as well as of God. Now they being once convinc'd of their Wickedness and Rebellion in the Face of all Creatures, which was before lurking in their Hearts, and to them unseen, but was by God designedly suffered to flow out and shew it self that they might no longer mistake it, they wou'd be of use to them for the future to keep them in Humility whenever God shou'd be pleased to present his justifying Grace to them : for then they wou'd no longer apply themselves to their Reason and their corrupt Faculties as pretending this Grace promised and offered them was actually to be applied and given them by Virtue and in Consideration of their own Activity and Conduct. The Remembrance of their former Rebellion and Disobedience which were the Fruits of their Presumption and of their Reason and corrupt Faculties, will make them submit their Necks, and for the Time to come quit themselves, and their own Prudence and Guidance, to cast themselves without Reserve with an entire Abnegation and Forsaking of themselves into the Arms of God's Grace, looking no more for Light or good Motions, for Purification, Righteousness or Direction but from his pure Mercy. Thus *has* the Providence of God concluded that the corrupt Heathen shou'd make their Corruption appear outwardly, to the end that this might serve as a Means to make them capable of God's Mercy, and that this Divine Mercy of his might be the more gratefully received and acknowledged.

God's dealing with  
the Jews.

In like manner, the Jews instead of embracing by Faith the Righteousness of God to which the Law led them, shut their Eyes against the Divine Light of Faith, which inwardly called them to the *Word* of God and which indeed was that Word, and adhered to themselves and to their own Works through Presumption and Pride : whence it came to pass that by not seeing and acknowledging their own Corruption and Impotence, they made use of all the Faculties of their corrupt Nature and its Activity, and that obstinately  
and

and resolvedly to practice outwardly and after their own Way the Law of God, thinking that because of this fine Work of their own Endeavours, God was obliged to give them his Righteousness; not knowing that their natural Corruption was so great as not to be able to think, nor speak, nor do of it self so much as one good Act (a). A Presumption this that is incompatible with the Gift of Righteousness which God works in the Soul only by the pure Motions of his Grace and good Spirit. Now what did God upon this *Pelagian* Wilfulness of the Jews? He concluded to suffer this Indisposition and Corruption of their Hearts, and the Impotence of their fancied Strength to appear openly and outwardly, by gross *Sins* and palpable Disobedience. So this Corruption hidden and unknown to them through their Blindness appeared and broke out by their Revolt against the Son of God, whom with his Followers they slew even when they came to offer them the Grace of God. This Rebellion against Grace it self, will put them, when they come to themselves and know what they have done, into a State and Disposition to receive God's Grace and Mercy after so pure a Manner, that they will never fall from it more; nor consult any more their own Reason, nor the Scripture with it, nor their own Motions, nor good Pleasure, though they think it nothing but Divine Zeal, nor lastly any thing that comes from themselves; for they will then see that all this heretofore produced nothing but Rebellion and the Rejection of God's Grace, but will resign up themselves in perfect Humility and without Reserve, Heart, Mind, Reason, Conduct and every Thing to the Light, Motions, Guidance, Grace and Mercy of the Holy Spirit, who will govern them absolutely and lead them to Righteousness and to Eternal Life. Thus we see how God concluded to suffer the inward Corruption of the Jews to appear and shew it self by an open and manifest Rebellion, that even this gross Disobedience of theirs might serve as a Means to dispose and fit them for the Mercy of God.

Thus it is that God concluded to suffer them all, Jews and Gentiles, to fall into palpable and notorious Rebellion, that by these Preparatives he might have Mercy upon all.

(Ver:

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(a) Rom.  
3. 11, 19.

*The Judgments of God how incomprehensible.*

(Ver. 33.) *O the Depths of the Riches, and of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! O my God, how infinite are the Riches of thy Goodness, thus to have Mercy on all Mankind, Jews and Gentiles, after so many criminal and wilful Falls and Rebellions! How wonderful is thy Wisdom, to make their very Rebellion a Means to the Disposition, to the Receiving and to the Confirming of them in thy Mercy, and to make the Enmity of Jews and Gentiles turn to their Re-union, and to their eternally loving each other! How penetrating and vast is thy Knowledge, that thus foresaw and ordered Things thus to the End of the World! O how unsearchable to the natural and corrupt Man and to all his Reasonings and Conjectures are the Judgments of God! How are his Ways and the Conduct of his Providence in the Manner of his Disposing of good and wicked Men, hard and impossible to be found out by the humane Wit of the Wise and the Understanding of the Doctors of the Law, of the Rabbins and Philosophers! For who hath known the Mind of the Lord! What Man, O Lord, cou'd ever have imagined or thought that thou would'st thus have managed and ordered the Jews and Gentiles, and the wicked Rebellions of them both, and that thou would'st thus draw Good out of them; and that so universal an one and for all the World? Who is he, O Lord, that cou'd give thee such wonderful Counsel? Or who is he that cou'd prevent God in Counsel, in Design and in Wisdom and Love, and he shall be repayed and recompenced as he deserves! None surely cou'd contribute any thing to all this; and the Wit of Doctors, wise Men and Philosophers with all their liberal and rational Learning were utterly in the Dark, and so are still as to this grand Design of God. It is God's Spirit alone that projects, executes, and declares all this; for of him, and through him, and for him are all things: to whom be Glory for ever. Amen.*

*The Abuse that is commonly made of this Exclamation of St. Paul.*

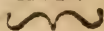
Thus, in my Opinion is the Doctrine of Election and Reprobation sufficiently cleared, and St. Paul's Sense of these Matters made plain and easy. Only let us observe (and 'tis likely I have made this Remark elsewhere) with how little Reason Men make use of this Exclamation of St. Paul, *O the Depths of the Riches of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God!* as a Pretence to

cover



cover and defend the grossest Absurdities of Mens own framing, because they are indeed *incomprehensible* to common Sense. Really a pretty Device this! Men frame Systems and Notions that are nothing but mere Difficulties harsh and hard, Precipices and Repugnances to all our Conceptions Divine and Human, to common Sense and Conscience; and then to maintain these inexplicable Fancies of their own they cry out, *O the Depths of the Riches of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!* instead of crying out when they put such Whimsies upon the World, *O the Depth of the Poverty, of the Folly and Ignorance of Human Understanding, how ridiculous are the Dotages and Judgments it makes, and how chimerical and contradictory are its Ways! How far is the natural and carnal Man from comprehending the Things of God's Spirit, that cannot be comprehended but by the Spirit and Grace of God! How true is all this! And how little do Men know, and how unwilling are they to know what this means!*

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But to any one that possesses God's Spirit, or even to any that has but some small Ray of his most holy Grace: the Ways of God are not only not incomprehensible nor impossible or hard to find out, but are Straitness, Light, and Easiness it self. For (a) the Spirit of God searches all things, even the Depths of God; and (b) he teaches us all things. And this is what I have treated of at large elsewhere; and so shall here pass it over and go on with the rest of my Reflexions on the Propositions that contain the Sum of this Epistle.

*God's Ways are not incomprehensible to such as are united to God's Spirit.*  
(a) 1 Cor. 1. 2, 10.  
(b) 1 John 2. 27.

XIV. Prop. Serve God no longer after the Jewish Way, but let your Worship be spiritual and true, consisting in a Life holy and consecrated to God (c).

*Spiritual Worship.*

Reflex. There were the first Fruits of this holy Worship in the Church of Jerusalem, as I have elsewhere noted; but it will be perfectly accomplished in the New Jerusalem wherein St. John (d) saw no more any material Temple. In the Church which God will renew upon Earth, he shall be served purely, in Spirit and in Truth without any more Ceremonies and Figures. And 'tis what I have observed elsewhere (e). The Christian Church is decayed and fallen for not having kept to

(c) Ch. 12.  
(d) Apoc. 21. 22.  
(e) Oec. before the Inc. Chap. 18.  
this. § 7, &c.

Chap. XVII. this. Men would needs return to the old Jewish Mode of Serving God, in the Spirit of the Scribes, Doctors and Rabbins of Pride and Presumption; and with a mere Jewish Zeal grounded themselves on and stick to the Letter of the Scripture, to their Ceremonies, and the accomplishments of their Heathenish Learning, and not on the Interior of an humble and divine Heart, guided by the Motions and Spirit of God. This goes now a days for Enthusiasm. *Yet the hand of the Lord is not shortened, nor does his Vertue fail: but it is your Sins that have made a Separation between you and your God (a).*

(a) Isa 69.  
v 1, 2. &  
50 v. 2.

The XV. Prop. relates to the Practice of Christian Vertues recomended by St. Paul. These Exhortations of the Apostle and all his other are grounded upon this Principle, that the Just, as long as they are in this World being encompassed with many Enemies, the Flesh, the Devil, and the World, and weak Believers; unless they take great Care may fall from their Righteousness and perish; as I have shewn in the proper Place (b). And therefore the Apostle's Charity warns them to be upon their Guard against whatever may happen, and to behave themselves circumspectly at all Times, and with all Sorts of Men and Circumstances. In the 1st Verse he shews them how to behave themselves toward God; in the 3d and following Verses, how to carry themselves towards their Neighbours of all Sorts and upon all Occasions; on all which I intend not to insist, having in divers Places already handled those Matters, as for Example, Submission to the higher Powers, in the Ninth Chapter of this Treatise, (the Sixteenth Proposition) Justice, Charity and the meek and peaceable Methods of dealing with weak and well meaning Persons of different Opinions; the Practice whereof I have endeavoured to shew in my Explication of the Eucharist (c). And, (agreeably to the Nineteenth Proposition) as St. Paul writ both to Jews and Gentiles freely and to further their Salvation, so have I endeavoured to write for the Sake of some who greatly desire Reasonings, and that with great Freedom and open Heartedness. I pray God turn all to Good. Amen.

## C H A P. XVIII.

*Advertisment concerning the Universality of Grace propos'd in this System: that it no ways favours Self-Love, as the System of the Pelagians does. Self-Love the direct Object of Reprobation. The Conclusion of this Work.*

I.  OBSERV'D a little before (a) that some seem'd to suspect the Doctrine of universal Grace, or of God's willing the Salvation of all Men, as favouring Self-love. Though this Objection destroys it self, and though it be a Contradiction to pretend that Doctrine favours Self-love which teaches that God designs to bring back all Men to the pure Love of himself, which is Life Eternal, and that he supplies them with Means to that End, and among others with the rough and terrible one of Purification, which is the very Death of Self-Love; yet it must be confess'd there are those that propose, believe and embrace such a kind of universal Grace, or such a Will in God to save all Men, that do it out of pure Self-love.

II. Such is the whole System and Divinity of the Pelagians, and of all those that are of their Opinions. 'Tis merely a System of Self love, and a Divinity of the Old Adam, who is exceeding skilful in procuring himself Rest, Ease and Content. These Men intend not to be saved by the way of Humility, Self-abasement and Abnegation, of inward and outward Mortification, of the painful and dreadful Purification which the internal Grace of God works in us to kill the very Root of our Old Man, by a living Conformity to the Death of Jesus Christ. No, no, they mean no such thing: Self-love, Esteem and Satisfaction, Self-approbation, Pleasure, Delight, Quiet, Joy, Contentments and Con-

*I. This System now way abets Self-love.*

*(a) Chap. 13. § 8.*

*II. The Theological System of the Pelagian Universality and Moderation, is a pure System of Self-love:*



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veniences, these must all be preserv'd; but especially and above all a Reason and Faith of Persuasion and Imagination that will be sure to follow, as best suits them, only such Means and such Ways of Salvation as they shall think convenient; and then comes a jolly Salvation, and an infallible Coronation of this Old *Adam*, that has all this while been so tenderly preserved.

We do not consider this as we ought. The whole System of Pelagian Divinity, their God, their universal Grace, their Faith of Reason and Imagination, their Morality, their Vertues, their Doctrine of Moderation, Forbearance, and Condescension, and of Peace, tends all but to the maintaining and preserving in Honour, in Quiet and Content the Old *Adam*, and that Love every one has for himself, which makes us very willing to procure our selves Peace, Rest and Satisfaction both in this World and in the World to come.

This is the subtlest and most deadly Poison that ever the Devil or Pharisaism infected the World with, nor is it possible to preserve our selves from it (for we are all from our very Birth tainted with it) any other way but by Humility, Self denial and Crucifixion, and that Purification which I have elsewhere explain'd at large.

III. The true Universality of Grace is consistent with the absolute Reprobation of Self-love.

III. Things being thus, I need not fear any will suspect the Universality of Grace, as it is by me propos'd, favours Man's corrupt and Self-love. Whoever shall read the Treatise of the Co-operation of Man, will soon be of another Mind; and indeed what I have said of the Substance of the Epistle to the *Romans*, or of one part of it is enough to prevent all Misprision in this Matter.

What I have said concerning the Reprobation of *Ishmael* and *Esau*, that is, of the carnal presumptuous Spirit of Man, full of and fasten'd to the Esteem of himself, of his Reason and Activity, of his own Works, whether seemingly divine or visibly corrupt ones, is of it self enough to clear me from such Suspicions. I have shewn there that this was the Spirit and Temper reprobated of God and destin'd to Eternal Death, and never to be receiv'd into Favour and Life. For God never will have any Friendship or Communion with such a  
Temper,

Temper, and it must necessarily be destroy'd, as that which is *the Son of Perdition*. So that whoever is of it and intends to be saved, must of Necessity kill and destroy it in himself whilst he is in this Life: if he does not, but be at his Death taken in it and cloath'd with it, they must both the Man and his Corruption, or his *Spirit of Ishmael and Esau*, be reprobated of God and cast into Eternal Death. Chap. XVIII.

IV. And therefore the Universality of God's Grace does not in the least flatter this wicked Spirit; for God does neither offer nor give his Grace to Men simply and absolutely. There are in Man two Things; the one is, his Soul created of God for Eternal Life; the other is his Corruption or his Self-love, introduced by the Devil and Sin for Eternal Death. Now God does joyntly present two other things to these two that are in Man: to his Soul created by him he presents Grace and Life; to Self-love or that Corruption which came from the Devil he presents the Cross, Death and Extermination. And it is impossible to change the Order and Habitude of these things; that is to say, to present Life and Grace to the Self love and Corruption of the Old *Adam*, and to present Death to the Soul, as they wou'd have it that hold absolute Reprobation. So likewise it is impossible to embrace one of these things without the other, Life and Grace without the Cross and Death: because the one is the Introduction of and a Condition necessarily annext to the other, it being impossible what is Good should live in the Soul but upon the Death of what is Evil; or that Light shou'd enlighten and yet the Hindrances to it and the Darkness not be dispell'd. And thus is Grace presented universally to every Soul on Condition that to clear herself of the Corruption that cleaves to her, she present to it the Cross and Death, and resign up to God all her Powers and her Liberty for God to produce and manifest in her his Divine Life, and all the Operations of his most Holy Grace just in such manner as he shall think best. And now I have ended my Work: Reader, farewell, and God grant it may be of Use to your Salvation!

IV. *The offer of Life to every Soul, and the offer of the Cross and Death to our Corruption and to our Self-love are inseparable.*

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V. I have been long enough speaking to Men. I have long desir'd to make an end, and return to Thee, O my God ; from whom I did not think I should have been so long distracted when I first began to write, intending only Ten or a Dozen Sheets on the Subject of thy Grace: but I know not what inconsiderate Desire of profiting others, and letting them see thy Divine and saving Truth, has insensible carried me to make so long a Work ; which I should not have undertaken had I foreseen the Length of it : seeing I not only had not then the greatest part of that Knowledge which came into my Mind as I was writing ; but because, though I had then known all I now do, I shou'd have staid till they were livingly and strongly realiz'd in my self before I offer'd to others these Truths, if I intended they should reap any Benefit by them. But likewise as thy infinite Goodness often rewards the Good-will as if the thing had really been done, so I beseech Thee (and that is all the Reward I crave) by this Work, such as it is, to promote thy own adorable Glory and the Salvation of my Neighbours no more nor no less than thou wou'dst have done had I writ it in the perfectest Disposition of Soul I cou'd have wish'd my self able to have done it in. I trust my Good-will and Intention will not be displeasing to Thee, and that thy Goodness has at least led my Mind and Will into the ideal Truth of things which I have desir'd others might know to thy Glory, that from this ideal Knowledge both they and I may breath after the real Possession of the things themselves which thy Grace alone can give to such as resign themselves up to Thee, and leave both their Errors and their own most elaborate Conceptions, and all the Activity of their Spirit and their Reason by a perfect Rest and Quiet to give way to thy sacred inward Operations.

I desire to give up my self to Thee in Vacuity and Silence that thou mayest for the future work in me that which is pleasing in thy sight. Receive my Soul into thy Holy Rest, and deliver me from the imperfect and indeed wholly corrupt Activity of my Mind and of my humane Reason, from the Spring of my Ideas of my barren and superficial Speculations, and from all the miserable Labour of the Sons of *Adam*, which, like that of *Egypt* does but double our Servitude, and estrange



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us from the true Liberty of the Operations of thy Holy Spirit. Take away all my Speculations, and give me instead of them one Drop of thy pure Love. Thou knowest I wou'd willingly make such an Exchange. Do thou make it in me and in all those I may have given occasion to fill their Heads with Ideas and Speculations, and to be too intent upon them. Make us all the Scholars of Faith and of Love, that so we may be fitted to receive from thy Holy Spirit the *things which cannot enter into the Mind of Man, and which thou reservest for those that love Thee.*

Why, O my God, do we think of any thing else but of loving thee and of making Way for thy Love, since for thy part thou thinkest of nothing but of testifying to us and giving us the eternal Effects of this thy infinite Love, and since this Love is the Great Master that teaches all things solidly ! Why think we on any other thing but of emptying our selves of our selves of our Activity and our Filth, seeing thou standest all ready to fill us with thy Grace and with thy saving Goods ? 'Tis the Enemy of our Salvation that thus blinds us, and holds us captive under his Will that he may destroy us eternally ; for he knows we are born his Slaves and in a State of Damnation ; and that thy most holy Grace and thy Divine Operations are the only Things that can redeem us out of it ; and that all that proceeds from us and is of our own natural Production is opposite to, and incompatible with thy holy Operations ; and that we have but this Life time to chuse our Party, either to continue in the natural and damnable State of our own Labour and Travail, or to surrender our selves to thee and to thy Operations by resting from our selves : and so this Enemy of our Souls endeavours to make us pass and employ this precious Time of our Life on something else. that at Death finding our Souls void of thee. of thy Grace and of the Divine Operations of thy Holy Spirit, he may irrecoverably carry them away with him into his infernal Kingdom, to which all belong that have not in them the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, but that of corrupt Reason and of the Wisdom of this World. And therefore it is that this accursed Spirit makes us spend our Time in busying our selves about our selves, and in thinking of a

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Thousand Trifles, Vanities, and Fooleries, such as are those that the Learned very seriously busie their Minds with, their idle Sciences and fruitless Curiosities, not imagining all the while that they are in Death, and they thereby lose the Time of re-entering into Life Eternal. And, O my God, do they thus lose thee for so little a Thing! The little I know of it is enough to make me understand and say, that the Whole is but a little Matter, and indeed only a great deal of Trash and Dung; and I have but too sadly experienced that by it one is estrang'd from and loses thee. Suffer me no more, if it be thy Pleasure, to return to those Studies again and lose thee. And since thou knowest thine own Worth, for that Love and Esteem thou hast for thy self suffer me not to be so great a Loser. Assist me to find and enjoy thee; for of my self I cannot do it. I cannot make thee to be born in me; and my corrupt Faculties with all their Efforts, can only cause barren Ideas to arise in my Mind, and sometimes only mere Fantoms, that drive thee away and hinder thy Work in me. None of our Speculations are the bright and real Truth, nor do they set us so much as one Step forward towards thee, O my God, till we sit still and wait for thy Salvation in this only Desire that thou wouldest come and work in us. How rare and unbeaten a Way is this, and how is it despised by the Learned and look'd on as Folly and Enthusiasm, they like Fools and senseless People speaking Ill of Things Divine they understand not, while they make themselves Slaves to that itching and restless Harlot of their own corrupt Reason, in which and in the Fruits of their Harlotry with her they place their chief Delight, as in Pride, Fierceness, Dissentions, Disputes, Factions, Hatred, and especially the foolish and deplorable Presumption of being by this Means some mighty Thing, of being truly enlightened Persons, and even sometimes of embracing the pure and chaste Eternal Wisdom, when indeed they clasp only a Strumpet, or the empty Cloud in the Fable, whence spring the vainest and foolishlest Monsters and Fictions imaginable.

Put down, O Lord, put down this grand Idolatry of human Reason which Men in our Days set up as God, and prefer before Divine Faith and before Vacu-  
ity

ity and Simplicity of Heart. Destroy its Empire, and so clearly discover its Weakness, its Folly and Extravagancies in such as idolize it, that both they and others perceiving the Doting and chimerical Fooleries they build upon it, may leave it and give up themselves to that saving Vacuity which Faith exacts.

*Let all vain Gods confounded be,  
And Fools that to them bow their Knee !*

*Psal.97.7.*

But may it be by such a Confusion as may promote their Salvation, and of Adorers of this *Great* and lunatick *Diana of the Ephesians* make them by a new Birth *Worshippers of the Father in Spirit and in Truth*. Extirpate also this other Jewish and pernicious Idol the mortal Heresy of Pelagianism, which flatly denying both the Disease and the Physician, the Medicine and the Cure of the natural and corrupt Man, throws him into an enevitable Necessity of perishing eternally. This Poison of Hell, strong enough to damn a thousand Worlds, is in our Days endeavouring to insinuate and spread it self everywhere, in some openly and grossly, in others after a more sly and subtil Manner. Some frankly confess they acknowledge neither the Miseries, nor the Blindness, nor the State of Damnation we are sunk into, nor the Operations of thy Spirit of Grace, nor the Folly Men commit in applying themselves out of a blind Zeal and with their perverted Reason to the Steril Ideas of the Letter and History of the Scripture, and to some external Practices, by which they imagine they become pleasing to thee, and enter into Life; and others without perceiving it give way to a Pelagianism more refined but not less destructive. that possesses almost all Men, by the secret Esteem they have of themselves and of their Advantages, by the Confidence they have in their own Understanding, Addresses, and Conduct, and in every thing which concerns themselves, and through the brutal Ignorance of thy good Pleasure, which is to take thy Delight with the Sons of Men, by communicating to them the Lights and lively Motions of thy Holy Spirit, and by his Divine Commerce and Communion with pure Souls. This is what these Ignorants universally



Chap. XVIII.  sally decry as Enthusiasm, while at the very same Time they have the pitiable Presumption to say, they themselves have the Holy Spirit and his Operations, seeing themselves reduc'd to the Necessity of either acknowledging themselves not to belong to *Jesus Christ*, nor to be his Members, or to own the same Truth in Substance, yet still taking, through a much-to-be-pitied Presumption, the dry Ideas, the Works and Illusions of their own Imaginations, and their dead Faith, for the Holy Spirit, and for his Operations and Guidance. Dispel, O Lord, these Delusions, and by the Strokes of thy Divine Light make Men comprehend the Greatness of their Misery and of their Impotence, the prodigious Distance they are from thee, the Vanity and Folly of all the carnal Imaginations and Practices they flatter themselves with; how heavenly and pure the Operations of thy Holy Spirit, which alone can make us pleasing to thee and save us, are; and how much they are beyond all Jewish Advantages we please our selves in, and like them, make our boasts of; whilst we are all the while really destitute of the only true Reason and Ground of glorying in God, the Inhabitation and our Possession of thy adorable Spirit.

Since the only End why thou createdst us was to be thy Temples, that thou mightest come and dwell and act and take thy delight in us, and we in thee; suffer not therefore, O my God, this End of all we are and have, this one only necessary Thing, to be any longer thus forgotten of some, nor despis'd and held impossible by others. nor in Effect be by all rejected as it is. Once more shew and make it manifest at least to Men of Good-will and to such as wait on Thee, that thou art no dead, inactive, or changeable God, that thou hast not said and promis'd great things to make good little or nothing. This is a Truth thou hast convinc'd me of by the living Experience and by the great Torch of Divine Light which thou hast in our Days held out in a Holy Soul which thou hadst made the Sacred Temple of thy Holy Spirit, and I shall ever bless and praise Thee for bringing me into her Acquaintance, who was the first that open'd my Eyes and set my Heart on seeking Thee in good earnest. (a)

*The Wicked that hate the Good, that cast them out for thy Name*

Name *fake as vile and despicable*, have insultingly and scornfully said, *What, will the Lord thus be glorified!* Even so Lord, *let thy Glory be thus known and manifested* by those that are little, single and low of Heart: Let thy Glory and thy fullest Praise be *establish'd*, as thou hast said (a) on the *Mouth of Babes*, and of *those that* (a) Pf. 8. 3. wou'd willingly submit to *suck the Breast*, to humble the proud *Enemies*, to the great *Joy of the Good*, and to the *Confusion of the Wicked*, and of the Proud, fierce and haughty Hearts of the Learned Fools of the Age, and of all such as admire them: or rather if possible to the Conversion and saving of them all: for there are many that insult God when they intend nothing less, so great is the Darkness of their Hearts.

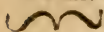
But when thou makest thy Instruments speak outwardly to the Blind, thou must, if it please Thee, O Divine Light, that hast more Strength and Penetration than the thickest and most central Darkness of our Hearts, enlighten us inwardly and give us a lively Knowledge of Truth and Falshood, of Good and Ill as it is before Thee: and *thy Truth shall make us free*. Thou must, O Humility of our Saviour, more powerful and central than the most rooted Pride of our Hearts, when thou sendest any to speak to our Pride, pierce us, and mortifie in us the sottish Esteem and Complacence we have in our selves, and the grand Idolatry of our own Understanding, of our own Reason and Will, and of all we do, though in thy Sight it be mere Dung and Filth. O Divine Eternity, reduce us from that Dispersion we are in among temporal and transitory Objects, and recollect us into the quiet and still Centre of our Hearts, there to give way and Attention to the omnipotent and ineffable Operations of thy Manifestation, one Moment whereof is preferable to Ages of Duration: But especially, O Divine Love, infinite and incomprehensible Love, that art greater than all the Malice of Men and Devils, swallow up and annihilate in thy self our Self-love, and make us Lovers of such a God as loves us so well as not to care (it shou'd seem) to be God but for our good. 'Tis thou, O Love Divine, that art the most misunderstood, the most blasphem'd, injur'd and abus'd of all things, tho' thou art of all things the most evident and the most universal.

Men

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Men have confin'd, disfigur'd and chang'd Thee into Hatred and Malevolence, into a Will to damn, or leave to be damn'd purely out of Humour the greatest part of Mankind, which thou mightest, hadst thou pleas'd, have sav'd from Eternal Death. Nor will they have Thee now to seek the Salvation of all Men by all sorts of Means; and teach that thou wilt the perishing of the greatest part of them without affording them either inwardly or outwardly the Means of Salvation, which they say thou hast from all Eternity decreed never to give them.

O Divine Love, those that speak thus never knew thee aright, nor have they seen with an Eye purely enlighten'd by Faith, how thou seekest the Hearts of thine Enemies, and how thou dost encompass them and wait all Opportunities to pierce them with thy Darts, and fill them with thy Flame when they never so little open them to Thee and quit their mortal Employments. For thou standest at the Door of their Hearts and knockest, and if any will but forsake his Distractions and hearken to the Voice of Love, he immediately forgets all the Affronts and Injuries that have been offer'd him, and enters the Hearts of his greatest Enemies, and there in infinite Charity, Wisdom and Power works the Work of their Redemption, teaching 'em his grand and divine Secrets, unknown to all that know not Love, and enabling them to do what was to them before impossible, and what he has shewn to be very possible to the Spirit of Love when he himself came in the Flesh to die, that by his Death he might give Life to the World.

But these Wretches instead of opening the Door to Love, that surrounds them, calls them and knocks on all sides of them, are so malicious as to shut their Ears and fill themselves with a thousand Buzzes and Distractions that they may not hear the Voice of Love, nor feel his Stroaks, nor give way to his Operations. They throw themselves desperately and madly into the Abyss of a thousand foreign, worldly and devilish Follies, what with the Cares of eating and drinking well, what with those of dressing well, of heaping up Riches, of procuring Esteem and Honour from Fools like themselves, what with stuffing their Heads with

im-



impertinent Speculations, Whimsies and Notions which the Enemy of their Salvation lays before them by the vain Sciences and Curiosities of the World to make them spend their Time in the Forgetfulness of Love, till Death comes and the Devil carries them into the bottomless Pit contrary to the designs of Love who waited only their Correspondence to save them and make 'em good by Participation. And yet their blind Comrades that are left behind while these Wretches go to Destruction, tho' they clearly see they have not gone the right Way, and that their Death is not the Death of the Righteous, yet they lay the Fault upon Love, and say, that Love so decreed from all Eternity, and that it was his Will not to have any kindness for them, nor to save them though he might have done it, only he would not.

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O Love Divine ! would to God Men would make thee Reparation for so great a Calumny, for the so many and so great Blasphemies and Injuries they so many ways offer thee, and often think they do well in it, so extremely great is their Blindness ! Wou'd they once knew and understood what thou art, and what thy Thoughts and Works are. O that I, unworthy and poor Creature as I am, could any way contribute to make thee livingly and truly known ; and this was the Aim that mov'd me to commit to writing some Truths concerning Thee, thy Designs and thy Creatures, what thy Conduct was towards them, when thou createdst them, when they fell into Sin, and what thou hast done and wilt still do both without and in Souls to restore them after their Fall, and to reduce all things by thy Providence to a compleat and perfect Redemption. But being so very superficial and so dead before Thee I could produce only inanimate Draughts and Ideas, and those too but very dark and obscure. 'Tis for Thee alone, if it please Thee, to join to them in our Souls the Reality and Life, the living and divine Light of the Heart, notwithstanding all our Offences that make us unworthy of them.

And because my Words and Thoughts are so disproportionate to the immense and incomprehensible Greatness of the infinite Majesty of Love, which is thy self, and of thy Works, which I have dar'd to  
 speak

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Speak of, may it please thy Divine Goodness to excuse my childish stuttering Speech concerning them, and to pardon all the Defects that from the Depths of my own Corruption I may have mingled with thy Truth and Works: for, O my God, I think they are not voluntary, and that if I know them, I shou'd my self disown them, if my Heart deceive me not, my Design and Intention in all I have proposed, are not hid from thee, and I trust thou wilt approve them, and that thou wilt defend me in the Hearts of good Men against the Lyes of such as seeing I do no way favour their Errors, Prejudices, Interests, and Partialities, will it may be endeavour to perswade Men that I have some wicked Designs, and that I have advanced things that turn to thy Dishonour, and to the Disadvantage of thy pure Love and of thy sanctifying Truth: thou knowest this is not true; and wilt as to that matter grant me Peace and Rest, and give me leave instead of all other Apologies, to praise thy Holy Name, thy great Power, thy immense Wisdom, and thy infinite Love, as I now intend to do, joining, for the better ending of this Work, my Spirit to that of thy Holy Prophet.

Psal. 145.

“ My God, my King, I will glorifie thee, and  
“ blest thy Name from Generation to Generation.

“ Every day will I blest thee, and praise thy Name  
“ for ever and ever.

“ How great is the Lord! and how worthy of  
“ Praises! His Greatness is infinite and incomprehen-  
“ sible.

“ One People shall tell thy glorious Works to  
“ another, and all shall declare thy Power.

“ I will be talking of the magnificent Glory of thy  
“ Majesty, and of thy wonderful Works.

“ Men shall shew the Steadfastness of thy Purposes  
“ and of thy wondrous Works, and I will speak of  
“ thy Sovereign Grandeur.

“ All shall break out into Praises when they remem-  
“ ber thy great Goodness, and shall highly praise thy  
“ Justice.

“ *The Lord is full of Mercies and Compassions; he is slow  
“ in his Wrath and great and ready in his Mercy,*

“ *The Lord is good to all Men, and the Works of his  
“ Mercy surpasses all his other Works.*

“ Let

“ Let thy Works praise thee, O Lord, and let thy Chap.

“ Beloved give Thanks unto thee ; let them shew the XVIII.

“ Glory of thy Kingdom, and publish thy great Power! 

“ That the Greatness of thy Power may be known unto Men, and the Magnificence of thy glorious Kingdom.

“ Thy Kingdom shall be an Everlasting Kingdom, and thy Empire shall endure throughout all Ages.

“ (a) The Lord is true in all his Words, and good (a) Vulgar Edit. in all his Actions.

“ The Lord upholdeth those that are falling, and lifteth up those that are down.

“ The Eyes of all Creatures wait upon thee, and thou givest them their Meat in due season. Thou openest thy Hand and satisfiest the Desire of every living Creature.

“ The Lord is just in all his Ways and full of Mercy and Goodness in all his Works.

“ The Lord is nigh to all them that call upon him ; even to all such as call upon him in Truth and Sincerity.

“ He will fulfil the Desire of them that fear him ; he will hear their Cry and save them.

“ The Lord preserves all that love him, and will destroy the Wicked.

“ Let my Mouth shew forth the Praises of the Lord, and let all Men bless his most holy Name for ever and ever. *Amen.*

*The End of the OEconomy of Providence,*

Which is

O F

**The DIVINE OECONOMY.**



# ERRATA.

<i>Page.</i>	<i>Line.</i>	<i>Error.</i>	<i>Correct.</i>
87	21	presents	prevents
130	8	or	of
205	11	convert	converted

THE  
PRINCIPLES  
OF

*Real and Internal*  
RELIGION

Asserted and Vindicated.

OR,

1. A Letter to Mr. Le Clerc, Author  
of *The Bibliotheque Universelle* :

AS ALSO,

2. Considerations and Remarks on  
his *Parrhasian* Censure of that  
Letter.

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By P. Poiret.

---

L O N D O N :

Printed for R. Bonwicke at the Red-Lyon in St. Paul's Church-Yard ; M. Wotton, at the Three Daggers in Fleet-street ; S. Manship, at the Ship in Cornhill, and R. Parker, under the Piazza's of the Royal Exchange. 1713.

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TO THE  
READER.



R. Le Clerc (of Amsterdam) has in several of his late Books and Treatises, so boldly attacked the most solid and vital part of real Religion, either by openly denying, or loosely ridiculing the Doctrine of Divine Grace, and the necessity of the Internal Operation of God in order to the Conversion and Restauration of Mankind, that his design seems plainly to have been to do what in him lay to extinguish the very Life and Spirit of Christianity, and to introduce the dead Pelagian System in the room of it.

AND that he might effect this the better, he has laboured to set himself up as the Grand Critick or Censor General of Books and Authors, both Sacred and Profane, and in that imaginary Quality not only dar'd to pervert the plain and receiv'd Sense of many Important Texts of the Holy Scriptures, but also to blacken and misrepresent the Works of many worthy Persons truly eminent for Piety and solid Learning, nay, even to bespatter too some of the most venerable Names of Antiquity.

THAT

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## To the Reader.

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*THAT* therefore the English Reader may be the more fully appriz'd of the disingenuity of Mr. Le Clerc's Critical Accounts, either of Men or Books, especially when they assert the true Christian Faith in Opposition to his Pelagian and Socinian Errors, it has been thought proper to publish here Mr. Poiret's LETTER to him, occasioned by the very unfair Relation he had given of the Divine Oeconomy in his Bibliothéque Universelle; and also some Considerations and Remarks on the Parrhasian Censure of that Letter in the Book call'd Parrhasiana, which was Written, as the World believes, by Mr. Le Clerc himself. Whence it will appear at large how very unjustly he has dealt by Mr. Poiret and others too of his Character, how extremely Partial his manner of Censuring them is, and in fine, what a poor, lame Account he gives of the Nature of the Christian Institution, which in this Work is fully explained and demonstrated in all its Parts, with respect to its most noble Principle, Means and End.



A  
LETTER  
TO

Mr. *Le Clerc*, Author of  
*The Bibliotheque Univer-*  
*selle, &c.*

S I R,

- I.  Have been long enclined to hope that you would have corrected the Censure you publish'd of my *Divine Oeconomy*, in the 5th Tome of your *Bibliotheque*, after having seen my own Account thereof, in *Novel. Reipub. Lit.* for June and July, 1687.

I. *The occasion of this Letter.*

Wherein I plainly shewed, that you had either mistaken or perverted my meaning in many things. But instead of that I find you have not only Reprinted your Works without any such Correction, but that you also still continue to treat me after the same unworthy manner, both in your ordinary Conversation, and in several new Places of your Books. What first induced, and still prevails with you to use me in such a manner; whether premedi-



**Letter I.** tated Malice, or an apprehension that should you give a true and impartial Account of me and my Writings, your Readers would thereby find your own Principles and Opinions confuted, and the contrary ones established; or whether it proceeds from Ignorance, such as all that I offer'd in Answer to your Relation, could not remove, I shall leave it to GOD, your own Conscience, and the Discretion of others to determine.

In the mean time, being willing to think the best of you, I had rather ascribe all you have said and written against me to the last of these Causes than to any other, and therefore in order to remove that the more effectually, I shall now bestow a little more pains upon you.

**II. Pride and Self-love the Origine of all Ignorance and Error.**

II. Our Saviour Christ tells us, *That every one that doth evil, hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light lest his Deeds should be reprov'd*; which is also true of such as broach and Propagate dangerous Errors and Opinions; namely, they hate the Truth, neither will they come to it; yea, they endeavour to keep others from it, lest their own Wicked Errors should be discovered. This clearly shews, that they who by false Relations, Calumnies, or any other external means oppose the Truth, do it not from those Motives which they pretend, but chiefly from a secret hatred of the Truth; and that such Hatred arises from the Love of Darknes and Error, which by reason of the original Corruption and universal Degeneracy of our Nature, we have all in common one with another; for all Men naturally love and esteem themselves exceedingly; and Darknes and Error favours and supports that Pride and self-love, which Truth (because it convinces Men of their Baseness and Nothingness) on the other hand pulls down and Destroys with all its might.

**III. The means of discovering the same either Internal or External.**

III. Hence it appears, *First*, That all Men, being born corrupted, are prone to love Darknes and Error, and that we have all a secret and latent hatred and aversion to the Truth; and accordingly in Scripture, we find the Character of Mankind in general expressed in these words, *all Men are Lyars*. *Secondly*, That no Man can by his own Natural Power and Ability deliver himself from this Condition, without the help and assistance of some other inward Principle to influence and enable him to turn from Darknes

ness to Light; and unless he fight against his own Natural Inclinations to Darkeness and Error, and willingly Sacrifice them all to the Power and Energy of the Truth. *Thirdly*, That no Man can be brought back from the ways of Error by any external Means, but in so far only as they may contribute to make him look back and Reflect upon that inward Spring of Darkeness and Error in himself; all that we can do to undeceive a Man, and put him in the right way, is only to mark and point out the most noted External Rivulets which naturally Issue from that source, and which more immediately fall under human Observation; that by carefully observing and tracing them, he may be the better enabled to discover the Internal Spring-head from whence they flow.

IV. This latter Method I shall hereafter take with you, when I come to trace some of your Opinions and Errors; and also when I come to shew the Reason not only why you embraced and espoused them, but also why you set your self with so much eagerness to oppose the Truth, and to Calumniate and Misrepresent the Writings of others, as well as mine, when they happen to contradict, or not to favour your Notions; and as to the other Method, which is wholly Internal, I shall leave that to God and your own Conscience.

Letter I.

*IV. We shall make use of those that are External only upon this occasion, with Mr. Le Clerc, and leave the rest to God and his own Conscience.*

V. But that you may not accuse me of Partiality, or say, that I prefer others to you, or my self to any one upon any internal Account, I must, as in Duty bound, acknowledge before I proceed, that by Nature we are all equally fallen and corrupted; and that I have in my self the same latent and wicked Seeds of Evil, as you have.

*V. We have all, by Nature, the same wicked Seeds of Evil in us,*

For, both I, as well as you and all other Men, was born in the Element of Pride and Self-love, grew up with, and by Education more and more sucked in and cherished the Principles thereof. I acknowledge that both I and others that were my fellow Students, and even my Tutors too, instead of applying our selves to the Study of that Holy Doctrine, which teaches us to despise and hate our selves; which shews us how vile and impotent we are in ourselves, and how base and ungrateful to God; and which consequently would have taught us to

*Which are Cherished and Improved by Education.*

## Letter I.

aspire after that Wisdom which alone can reform and subdue the great and universal Corruptions of our Nature ; I acknowledge, I say, that instead of this, we bestowed all our time and labour upon the Study of such vain and empty Trifles as most contributed to confirm and cherish in us our own natural Pride and Self-love ; for such supposed Accomplishments we were praised by those whom we looked upon as proper Judges ; and because their praises were grateful to us, and finding that I became more and more acceptable to others upon such Accounts ; I looked upon all the Ideal Knowledge that I acquired by such studies, as the proper Ornaments, or as a Dress suitable to, and well-becoming my proud self-love ; yea, I considered them even as Life itself ; so that at last I begun to espouse the Notions and Opinions that I had sucked in, with that warmth and obliquity that I could not bear to hear any Doubts or Disputes raised about them ; yea, I even wished that whatever was at any time published contrary to, or different from my own Notions, might be either wholly cancelled, or at least so effectually exposed and ridiculed, as that it might fall of itself, and in order to find out some solid Foundation, wherewith to support and please my Pride, I began to slight the study of the Languages and critical Learning, as empty, frothy and superficial ; and that possibly not so much because they are so indeed, as to indulge my own Vanity ; and I applied my self to the study of God's Works, both Material and Spiritual, Physical and Metaphysical, Supernatural and Theological ; and the Proficiency that I made in all those several Branches of Knowledge, made me conclude that the Opinion I had of my self, as well as the Character which others were pleased to give of my Learning, was not ill Grounded.

VI. *How and by what means God brought me to see the vanity and danger of my own Pride and Self-love.*

VI. But because God Resists the Proud, hence I mixed and added many Chimera's to my own barren Ideas, which were by no means able to restrain my vain and irregular Desires, and I gave my self up so entirely to the Idol of corrupted Reason, which I adored even almost as a God, that I might and should have fallen into all sorts of Vanity and Error, if the tender Care and Goodness of God, *Who desireth that all Men should be Saved, and come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, had not graciously interposed and prevented me. He took away from me the opportunities of mak-



Letter I.

making Physical Experiments, with which I was always much delighted, and of much Reading, which now began to become dangerous and even hurtful to me by reading *Curcellus's* Book against original Corruption; and he furnish'd me with the better and more Pious Writings of *Thomas a Kempis*, and *Thaulerus*, and with the German Theology: Add to this, That from my Infancy, he had implanted in me some sparks of Divine Fear, which I always retained, and with which I was always touch'd both before and without any previous act of Ratiocination, so that the efforts of my own corrupted Reason were thereby restrained, and I sincerely wished that all that I had or did might become subservient to his Glory; so that in consequence of such Good Desires and Inclinations (which were also the Gift of his Grace) I began to see, tho' in a very confus'd Manner, the Corruption, in which the World and even *Christendom* itself at this Day lies wholly Buried. I forthwith observed then that Purification of the Soul, was not, as it ought to be, sufficiently recommended in Divinity, nor the absolute necessity thereof clearly enough deduced from and founded upon the Love of God and our Neighbour.

By furnishing  
me with Good  
Books,

And convinc-  
ing me of the  
absolute ne-  
cessity of Purification.

VII. After this, all the several Schisms and Contentions of Sects began to displease me. And seeing I wished and desired that all Parties might come to some Agreement, I endeavour'd to put the best Construction I could upon every thing that differ'd from those Principles and Opinions in which I had been Educated, and for the sake of Unity and Concord, to reduce them all into one as near as possibly I could, not excepting the *Socinians* themselves, who I thought might easily be brought back to the Unity of the Truth, by the help of some few Principles, such as (1.) That GOD, and the Things in God, are incomprehensible by any Human Mind; and that what we do conceive of him, is so Imperfect, that it always comes infinitely short of what yet remains in him which we do not comprehend. (2.) \* That in GOD there is first, a thinking Substance or Nature, secondly, The Direct, Essential and Adequate Object of that thinking Power, viz. Its own luminous Idea, Representation or Form, and, thirdly, The joyful Acquiescence of God therein. (3.) That these three are

VII. Upon  
which I began  
to see the mis-  
chief of Sects.  
And endea-  
vour'd to  
bring all Par-  
ties to some  
Agreement.  
Not excepting  
the Socinians,

\* vid. infra.

## Letter I.

Who might be  
convinc'd of  
their Errors,  
were it not  
for Pelagia-  
nism.

Which is the  
great source of  
all Heresies  
and Errors.

what we call the Trinity in GOD; and that more-  
over there are innumerable other things in GOD in-  
finitely exceeding our Capacities. (4.) That in *Christ*  
there is his Human Nature consisting of a Created  
Soul and Body, which is not GOD; and that the  
Eternal Divinity is present with the same in a closer  
manner than with any other Creature; so that such  
an Union in so singular and peculiar a manner may be  
called Personal, and upon the same account the Huma-  
nity and Divinity in *Christ* may be called one Person,  
in which (according to the first Principle) there  
are an infinite number of Things, exceeding Human  
Comprehension. These Things being rightly explain-  
ed, I thought might suffice to reclaim the *Socinians*,  
and to bring them back through *Christian Love* into  
the same Unity of Faith with us. But I had not then  
observ'd that *Pelagianism* was the true spring and  
source of all their Errors. For *Pelagianism*, or the  
Denial of a real, inward, and universal Corruption  
in our Nature; and the disowning the necessity of  
Divine Grace, in order to purify, illuminate and re-  
store all Things both inwardly and outwardly, is the  
cheifest and most pernicious of all the *Socinian Errors*:  
Otherwise if they would acknowledge their own Cor-  
ruption, and humbly address themselves to God, and  
implore his Light and Help, they would, by the Di-  
vine Assistance, soon come to see their Errors about the  
Holy Trinity and the Person of *Christ*. But so long as  
they will neither acknowledge their own Corruption,  
nor own themselves to be Sick, nor think that they  
want any inward Help or Cure of God, for all their  
Faculties; but rather trust wholly to the Activity of  
their own Corrupted Reason in searching after Divine  
Truths, however Orthodox they may have been in  
other Things, they cannot chuse but run into all sorts  
of pernicious Heresies, and even sometimes into A-  
theism itself. Of such a pernicious Nature is this  
fundamental Heresy, that where it is not, all others  
may easily be removed, and where it is, they most na-  
turally and certainly follow it. And I confess, that in  
adhering too close to my own Corrupted Reason, I was  
approaching nearer to this Destructive Fountain than  
I was aware of.

VIII. Other means of dis- as I have already mention'd, and I thought I had  
covering the  
Corruption and Errors of Mankind.

made

made a better Progress than many others, when it pleased God, by the means of a certain Virgin, whom you and many others despise, to shew me by many glorious Truths, first, in a more general manner, the Universal Corruption, Darkeness, Errors and Vanities of Mankind, all which I could not in my Judgment but assent to; after which he was also pleased more particularly to touch my Heart in the most sensible manner, with the sense of my own Pride and Self-love, which 'till then, thro' blindness, I thought had been but very inconsiderable. Upon this, I began to feel in my self a Repugnance and Indifference; I perceived that I was tempted to despise and even to ridicule those Divine Truths, which touched me so nearly. This startled and surpriz'd me: and looking more narrowly into my self (who 'till then thought I had been incapable of treating any Thing that I knew to be a Divine Truth, in such a manner) I open'd my Soul in great trouble before GOD, acknowledging my own wretchedness, and the Diabolical Dispositions of my Heart, and besought him, that he would either root them out of me; or if they were incurable, that he would rather extinguish me than suffer such Hellish Inclinations to exert themselves against the Truth; thinking it better that I only should Perish and be Damn'd, than to live and fight against his glorious Truth, or be an Instrument of Damnation to many others. From that time I began to have hopes that the Lord had graciously heard the Voice of my Prayer; for from thence forward I began more clearly to know and to Love the Truth in opposition to my own Pride and Self-love, to my own natural Inclinations, and to all the Ornaments and Helps of vain imaginary Learning; then I wished and prayed that he would more powerfully purify and cleanse my Heart, until he had rooted out every thing that was not of his own Planting; then I resolv'd in and through the Strength and Assistance of his Grace, to use all my endeavours to recommend the same Truth to others, without regarding the Calumnies, Oppositions, and Reproaches of Men, how repugnant soever such treatment might be to my own Pride and Self-love, which if they were but mortified thereby, I was sure would redound to my own Good: I say, I resolv'd to do so by the help of Divine Grace, because that from what I had but lately felt in my self, I had Learned that I ought not to trust to my self nor to my own Fidelity towards the

A 4

Truth;



## Letter I.

Truth; that to espouse the Truth in Sincerity is the Gift of God; that in our Corrupted Hearts there are the latent seeds of Enmity against God, and Hatred against the Truth; and that moreover, all those who hate the Truth, do it not knowingly and with design; but sometimes it flows from that native fund of Pride and Self-love, which all Mankind are so deeply plunged into, that they do not see the Evil thereof; and that therefore most Men who thus wander astray, deserve rather *Christian* Commiseration than to be Hated or Despised.

IX. *The Reason why I have given this account of my self.*

IX. These things, Sir, I have thought fit to mention more particularly to you, not only to shew you how ready I am to acknowledge my own failings, that so you may not take it amiss when I tell you yours; but chiefly in hopes that if you will give yourself the trouble to examin and sift your own Heart, and use some such method as I have mention'd, you may find more Benefit and Instruction thereby, than from all the Disputes and Wranglings in the World.

X. *Some account of Mr. Le Clerc's Writings in so far as they have occasion'd this Letter.*

\* vid. Par-rhal. Pag. 353, &c.  
He is careful of Writing in a Good Stile: But not of teaching sound Doctrines; Neither in his Dogmaticks,

X. But leaving these Things to God and your own Heart: I shall now more particularly apply my self to consider your Writings, as they are the occasion of this Letter: Whatever Reasons I have to think that you are the Author of several Books; I shall not therefore call any yours, but only such as you \* publickly own, or such as plainly appear and which several Persons say they know to be yours, such as the *Theological Epistles of Liberius concerning Holy Love*, the Principles whereof are both agreeable with those of your other Writings, and sometimes either commended or defended in them. They that have read your Writings, may observe, that you take great Pains to write in a good stile, for fear of offending your Readers Ears, and of losing the Reputation of an Elegant Writer; But I wish you had been as careful that your matter had been true, sound and good! For in your Dogmaticks, instead of finding solid and salutary Truths, there is hardly any thing to be met with, but either little, insignificant Critical Niceties, and some very Superficial Observations, or very dangerous Errors in my Opinion, especially where you represent (as in the above-mentioned Epistles particularly) the *Socinian* Principles (and some others even worse than they) in such a Light, as if you had it chiefly at Heart to support their sinking Cause, and as if it were a matter indifferent to Salvation, whether a Man be a *Socinian* or not. In your Polemical Writings any one may see, that you deny and impugn the Grace and Operation of God

Nor Polemicks.

in us to that Degree, that you look upon it as a mere  
 † Chimera, and have the presumption to || affirm that  
 no where in Holy Scripture, the Grace of God signi-  
 fies the internal and immediate Operation of the Holy  
 Spirit in the Soul, when yet the Thing itself, or the  
 internal Operation of God in Souls, is asserted  
 almost in every Chapter of the Bible; yea, in the  
 Three first Chapters of the *Ephesians*, you may find the  
 same thing mention'd after several ways all to the  
 same Sense, and even with the Express Name and Cha-  
 racter of *ἡ Νύμφη ἡ ἐκκλησία ἐν ἡμῖν*. Further, every  
 one will observe that you wholly reject the Spiritual  
 Sense and meaning of the Scriptures, and that you de-  
 ny Original Sin and every thing else that stands in the  
 way of your belov'd *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Notions.  
 And finally, it may be observ'd, that where you † re-  
 late many things, as from others, with the same teme-  
 rity as if a Blind Man should undertake to discourse  
 about Colours, concerning the Inspirations of Holy  
 Men you have also traduced many Places of the Holy  
 Writings, of *Job*, the *Psalms*, and the *Proverbs*, all  
*Ecclesiastes*, and all the *Song of Solomon*, as unworthy of  
 the Holy Spirit, the last of which you compare to the  
 Song of *Polithemus*, concerning *Galatea* in *Ovid's Me-  
 tamorphoses*.

XI. And as to the Persons you set your self against as  
 your Adversaries, they are chiefly those that oppose  
 and refute your Errors, *Pelagianism* and *Socinianism* es-  
 pecially, upon which account you fall foul, not only  
 on the Modern Orthodox Divines, but even on the  
 Fathers of the Primitive Church, and especially *St. Au-  
 gustine*; because he was a strenuous Assertor of the Anti-  
*Pelagian* and Anti-*Socinian* Doctrines. And as to your  
 manner of treating your Adversaries and their Princi-  
 ples, you seem to have propos'd to your self the  
 following Rules. 1. To irritate and provoke them to  
 use angry and harsh Expressions in their Answers, if  
 they be alive, from which you take occasion to lessen  
 and destroy their Credit in every thing else. 2. To  
 represent them, if they be Dead, as mean and con-  
 temptible, the better to inspire your Readers with  
 Contempt and Hatred of them. And because 'tis not  
 possible that all your Adversaries, or at least that the  
 most venerable among the Saints, should have given  
 occasion to such Mockery and Raillery, you sup-  
 ply that defect by the Help of the following Rules.  
 3. You charge them with things false, absurd, and  
 contradictory,

Letter I.

† Entrer. p.

325.

|| Ibid 325.

& seq;

*What Doctrines*

*Mr. Le Clerc*

*chiefly opposes.*

*Eph. i. 6, 7,*

*8, 13, 17,*

*18, 19.*

*2. 5, 6, 7, 8,*

*10, 22.*

*3. 7, 16, 17,*

*19. 20.*

† Sentimens.

*Let. 11, 12.*

XI. *And what  
 Authors.*

*In what man-  
 ner he treats  
 them.*

## Letter I.

contradictory, in Words the same indeed, or like to theirs ; but in Composition, Application and Sense, wholly different ; that by the first Artifice you may the better preserve your own Credit, and by the other destroy theirs, and ridicule them as Madmen, whom you thus traduce. 4. The Divine salutary and essential Truths which they deliver and inculcate in the most divine and lively manner that can be, you pass over in silence, and you carp at such trifling and superficial things, concerning the letter and other critical Niceties, which they who chiefly regarded the substantial Part, seldom or never minded. 5. In such things where you can find no room for Criticism, if your Adversaries have omitted any thing material, you are angry with them, that they should pass it over in Silence, and if they do take notice of every thing relating to the Subject they treat of, you accule them of superfluity, and that they take notice of things which every Body knew before : If they advance such things as agree with the commonly receiv'd Opinions, you say they are common, and have been often said before ; and if they propose some things which possibly are not so obvious, you blame them as if *they affected to think otherwise than the rest of Mankind, and that they would be thought to be guided by some new Light from Heaven.* So that whether they speak or hold their Tongues, they can no ways escape your sharp and unjust Reflections. 6. Those good Things which either you do not understand, or but Imperfectly, and which you would not be thought to impugn directly, or which you cannot attack or refute by any Arguments, and especially when they clearly destroy your own pernicious Opinions ; such Things I say, that you may the more artfully expose them, you usually represent by such Names and Characters as you think fittest to raise either an Indifference or an Aversion, or Contempt, or Laughter in your Readers. Thus every where in your Books, the inward and operating Grace of God, and other Sound and Orthodox Doctrines, are branded with the Names of *Scholastic Errors, Philosophical Abstractions, Chimera's and Dreams, Platonic Ideas, Metaphysical Subtilties, Mystical Mysteries*, and such like Epithets, a Thousand Times over and over, even to a Surfeit ; and the Orthodox themselves sometimes called *Schoolmen*, then *Metaphysicians*, at other times *Platonists*, and again *Mystics* ; and by these and such like Methods, after having infus'd

such



such ridiculous Notions of your Adversaries into the Minds of your Readers, you endeavour to attract and fix their esteem upon your self, for having exposed and shewn the Folly and Inconsistency of such Idle and Chymical Fancies.

XII. I might yet recite many more of your Artifices, were it not that I propose to confine my self to those parts of your Writings only, where you have exercised your wrangling critical Talents, against me, and some others, without meddling with those that are Positive and Dogmatical. And altho' whatever I have alledg'd will appear to be true, from almost every part of your Writings, even at first opening, yet I shall take the pains to prove what I have asserted by proper Quotations from the Books themselves. But first, I think it will not be amiss to let the Reader see that you have intermix'd some things in your Writings, even worse (as I hinted before) than any thing the Socinians have yet advanced; and then to acquaint the Reader with the particular Reasons why you are so angry with me, and why you have Publish'd so false and unjust an account of me and my Writings to the World.

XIII. In the first Epistle of your *Liberius*, \* 'tis affirm'd, that the Divinity and Humanity in *Christ*, cannot be strictly united together as two Creatures can. And in order to prove this assertion, *Liberius* promises to demonstrate, *That two Creatures can be more closely united together, than a Creature can be with God, that is, that God and the Creature are less capable of being united together than one Creature with another.* By which assertion, not only that from whence the superexcellent Dignity and Glory of *Christ* arises, is destroyed, but in Men also that Desire and Love which is due to God is greatly discourag'd; and at the same time our Love, Desire and Affection towards the Creatures (in as much as we can enjoy them more than God) is highly extoll'd, inflam'd and prefer'd; For that is always the most Lovely, with which the greatest and strictest Union and Enjoyment can be made. But I do not think that any of the Socinians, in extenuating the Hypostatic Union in *Christ*, ever came to those extremes, or ever thought of establishing their Heresy upon a Principle so injurious and so destructive of the Fundamentals of Christianity, such as is the Love of God and the withdrawing our Love from the Creatures, But *Liberius* not only very con-

fidently

Letter I.

XII. *What parts of Mr. Le Clerc's Writings are Animadverted upon in this Letter.*

*Whereof some things are worse than Socinianism itself.*

XIII. *A dangerous Position.* \* Pag. 7 and 8.

Letter I. *fidently affirms such Things, but even attempts to demonstrate them, in the following manner.*

*The more Things agree in their Nature, the more capable they are of a closer Union;*

*But there is a greater Agreement between two finite Spirits (OR TWO CREATURES) than between a finite Spirit and God (OR BETWEEN A CREATURE AND GOD.)*

*Therefore two Creatures may be more closely United together, than God and a Creature can.*

*The Fallacy  
thereof detect-  
ed.*

A Wise Demonstration indeed ! But seeing we cannot expose such dangerous Notions too much, I shall beg leave by way of Digression, to shew the Fallacy of this notable Sophism. Things are said to agree, or bear a relation one to another in two respects : First, in respect of the likeness of the matter or form ; or secondly, in respect of the end and design ; as when one thing is made for or in order to enjoy something else. I will give some plain Instances. In the first respect, a Foot and a Foot, a Shoe and a Shoe, a Town and a Town, a Man and a Man, agree together ; in the other, a Foot and a Shoe, a Man and a Town, and in the same respect also GOD and a Creature. This being observ'd, the Fallacy or Inconclusiveness of *Liberius's* Sophism clearly appears. For if you take the Maxim he builds upon, as regarding the first sort of Agreement, it is both false and absurd to say, that things of the same matter and form can be more closely united together, than those Things, which however they do not agree in that respect, do yet agree in respect of their end and design : And the Reason is this ; because that those Things which agree in matter and form, are only so far like one another, but not therefore properly capable of Union : But in that one thing agrees with, or answers to another in respect of its end, it evidently follows from thence, that the Nature, Faculties, Properties and Constitution of that Thing, must have a Tendency and Disposition to the other, in order to receive or to be united to the same in the closest manner that can be. And this is evident from the foregoing Examples : For tho' a Shoe and a Shoe agree more together in respect of their matter and form than a Shoe and a Foot ; yet they are not more capable of being united together

ther than a Shoe and a Foot, which agree in respect of the End: And the same Thing is evident in a Thousand other Instances. But if the *Liberian* Maxim be understood with respect to the End (as it ought to be) then the assumption is false; for, if it be granted that those Things may be united more closely together, that agree more with one another in respect of the End; the assumption is false, that a Creature agrees more with a Creature, than God and a Creature; for a Creature, especially a Human Creature, of which we now treat, is not the End and Design of any other Creature: But God is the End and Design of the Creature, which is therefore made of such a Nature that it might be united to God. Therefore God and a Creature may be more closely united together, than one Creature can with another. And thus I have shewn the Fallacy and Weakness of this pretended and truly Heretical Demonstration of *Liberius*; the same which from another consideration I also refuted in \* another Place, together with many more of your dangerous and ill-grounded Tenets.

Letter I.

\* Cog. Rat.  
Ed. 2. p. 238.

XIV. And here indeed we must look for the true and particular cause, why you are so great an Enemy, in your Accounts, to my Writings.

For tho' at first I had no Intention to attack either you or any other, yet seeing I proposed to employ my Pen about such Things as I thought might best promote the Glory of God, the Truth, and the Salvation of Men, and encourage Vertue and solid Learning, and Discountenance Pride, Vanity and Self-love; therefore as often as I meet with any Books in which any of these Things were attacked, or in danger of being shaken, then I endeavour'd not only to establish my own Principles more firmly against the Contents of such Books, but I very often either refuted or anticipated their Arguments, especially if they seemed to carry any force with them, or if I found them in Anonymous Books, where when no Author is Named, no Body ought to have thought himself attack'd. And in this manner when your Anonymous Books (some whereof I did not know 'till some Years after that they were yours) came into my Hands, and besides when I understood that you despised and spoke publickly against my Writings and Sentiments, in order to prejudice others against them;

XIV. *The particular Reasons, why Mr. Le Clerc is angry with this Author's Writings.*

then



## Letter I.

(a) *Entretiens  
sur divers  
Matières de  
Theol.*

then I not only more firmly Established the Principles upon which the Truths that I had published were grounded, against such fundamental and pernicious Errors as I found scattered throughout your Anonymous Writings; but I also vindicated the Truth from your Exceptions, and subverted the Foundations of your Principles almost in every thing. This I have chiefly done in my *Divine Oeconomy*, where I begin in the very Preface and enquire into the Prejudices of (a) one of your Anonymous Books against the Knowledge of things Intellectual; and in the rest of the work I have in several Places expressly confuted your *Pelagian* Notions, and destroyed the Principles of *Socinianism*, which you seem to have undertaken either to defend or to Palliate: Again, I have clearly shewn how improper and insufficient Critical Learning is, without the inward Light and Operation of the Holy Spirit, either to interpret the Scriptures, or to Judge what Books are Canonical; and finally, I have in other Places fully confuted your Doctrine concerning the Power and State of Man, and that of Original Sin, which you deny, with all the Arguments and Exceptions you have offered in that Anonymous Book; all which, with many more of your Errors, I have fully and irrefragably overturn'd and destroy'd; so that he that shall read my Writings, will be sufficiently armed against the Danger and Infection of your Pernicious Errors.

XXV. *Whether it be probable that Mr. Le Clerc should publish a true Account of the Oeconomy.*

XV. The case standing thus, you happen to come to see my *Oeconomy*, which Refutes those your Errors, and then you pretend to give an Account, or Epitome thereof in your *Bibliothèque*; but whether you could do it without Indignation and Hatred, let those judge, who will consider what answer must be given to this previous Question; viz. Whether it be probable that a Man, whose Principles and Studies leads him not only not to acknowledge, but even to excuse and deny the Corruption of his own Nature, and to reject the inward help and assistance of God; and who, besides the common springs of Hatred against the truth above mentioned, has those particular Reasons of aversion, which arise from being contradicted in those things which he has espoused as nearest and dearest to himself; whether, I say, it be probable that such a Person will do Justice to that work, and faithfully relate the Arguments in their full force, which totally subvert and overthrow his own beloved Notions and Opinions?

Opinions? It is fit then to let you know now (which I have not so plainly done before) that you are not a judge or an Historian in this case, but an Adversary; and that therefore your Readers ought not in common Prudence to judge of my Writings by any Character that you have or may give of them.

XVI. I must own indeed there are several things in your Account, which I have no Reason to find fault with; for surely if every thing that you had said of me had been false, you had taken an effectual way utterly to Ruin your own Credit. But when you relate many things right, and then at the same time not only omit the Principal, but even intermix many absurdities with them, 'tis evident that the whole will appear the more credible to many, as there are more Truths intermixed with them; unless some of a more penetrating Judgment should rather conclude against you, that he who, even by his adversaries Confession, had advanced some such evident and important Truths, could not be guilty of such absurdities as you charge upon him; whence they could not but justly suspect the Truth and Impartiality of your Account.

XVII. The truth is, you have imputed to me so many false, absurd and contradictory things; and you have done it in so Ironical and Sarcastical a manner, that they that believe your Account, cannot but despise me as one that knows not what he says, and look upon my Writings as absurd and unworthy of being read; and this I am not at all ashamed to repeat, because I find I am not the only Person that you have treated thus, but that 'tis your Custom to treat many of the best and most learned Fathers and Doctors, both ancient and modern, and many Noble and Divine Truths, in the same ridiculous and sarcastical manner. But of these and such like I shall say more hereafter.

XVIII. In the mean time I shall observe to you that there are two things in general, which shew that you have not had a strict regard to the Truth in your Account. First, That though in the Preface to the *Oeconomy of the Creation*, I particularly advised and intreated my Readers, not to judge of the whole work by the first Book, because it contains some abstracted Truths, and for that almost every thing in it is either contrary to, or much more sublime than the common Notions; you notwithstanding, passing over the other

Letter I.

XVI. Mr. Le Clerc's Artifice to impose upon his Readers.

XVII. He abuses others as well as Mr. Poirer.

XVIII. Two general accusations against Mr. Le Clerc. The first general Accusation.

## Letter I.

*That he does  
not give a fair  
Account of the  
Oeconomy.*

five Books, or but slightly mentioning them, give only an account of the Contents of the first Book; although in the Preface I expressly advised, that they who are not used to Metaphysical Speculations (such as those are for whom your Popular Discourses seem to be composed) should begin with the following Books, and which therefore, if you had acted the honest and sincere part, you ought to have given an account of first; and indeed you recite the Contents of the first Book (which you have more than once confessed both to me and others, that you do not understand) in such a manner, as if you seemed not only sometimes to forget what you are about, but always to have no regard to what is delivered in the following Books; thus you think that in the first Book there is wanting the Reconciliation of the Divine Predictions about future Contingencies with the Liberty of Man's Will; whereas I have not only shewn how they are reconcileable in the last Book, but also in the Preface to the first Book; and afterwards in the Twelfth Chapter thereof, I expressly told the Reader, that although the chief Principles upon which it depended were laid down there, yet that the matter was not to be discussed there, but in the last Book, to which it properly belonged. I thought it had been according to the Rules of Criticism to read before you Censure; but it seems great Criticks think they have no occasion to read and consider any thing that they take upon them to relate and judge of.

XIX. *The Second general  
Accusation,  
That he  
charges Mr.  
Poirot with  
writing My-  
stically.*

XIX. The other general Complaint I have to make against you is, That you endeavour to persuade the World that my Writings contain other matters than really they do; affirming almost upon every occasion that I, whom you call a Mystick, do treat of Mystical things in a very Mystical manner, and this Character you apply even in your Index to all my Sentiments; nay, you are so fond of this Topick, that you not only call my *Irenicum*, which treats of the present Controversies in *Christendom*, Mystical; but in the

(a) Pag. 547. Seventh (a) Tome of your *Bibliothèque*, where you pretend to give an Account of the Works of *Harphius* and *Molinos*, you affirm, that the Year 1687 ought to be called both by them and me a Mystical Year; by them, because they published one or two; and by me, because in that Year I published eight *Mystical Books*: With this Invention of yours you are  
fo



so pleased, and you think it will so mightily contribute to raise the Laughter of your Readers, and to depreciate my Writings, that you not only repeat it more than Ten times in the compass of a few Pages, but even in your daily Conversation; when you have occasion to speak of me or mine, you continually harp upon the same string. But to set you right in this matter, I must tell you; that I would not only not for all the World despise those things which you so slightly call Mystical; because they are nothing else but the Revealed Treasures of all Divinity; but that I so highly esteemed them, that if they were to be purchased with the loss of all worldly Goods, and with the greatest Sufferings and Afflictions, I heartily wish that God would enable me to say with a cheerful Heart, as the Divine Ignatius said, *Let me be burnt and crucified; let me be exposed to Wild Beasts, and my Bones lie unburied; let me be cut Joint by Joint, and let my whole Body be ground to Powder; yea, let me undergo the Torments of Hell, so that I may but at last enjoy JESUS CHRIST*, and his secret and mystical Embraces! But though I come infinitely short of these things, and have not yet taken upon me to write upon such Subjects, yet I have published, and illustrated with proper Prefaces, several excellent Mystical Treatises written by others: And these I have sometimes commended in my Writings; I have quoted some of their Principles; I have explained some of their Phrases; and I have removed several Difficulties that occurred in them; and the better to dispose my Readers to Enquire after and to peruse them, I have here and there given them a Taste of what they are to expect from the Books themselves; and all this I have done to shew and recommend, as far as in me lay, such helps, infinitely exceeding any thing of mine, as I thought most conducive to excite in good and well disposed Souls a more ardent Love of God, and to stir them up to a more vigorous pursuit after their own Eternal Happiness, and to adore and celebrate the wonderful things of God. But to say that my Books are therefore Mystical, or that every thing in them is Mystical, follows no more from thence, than that the first Edition of my *Cogitations* is Mystical, which is what no Body ever dreamed of; although in that (a) work I several times mention some Mystical Authors with Approbation; or than that your Books are Poetical Books, because that in them you oftner quote and

(a) Pag. 30.  
72. 250. 251.  
299. &c.

## Letter I.

XX. Whether  
Mr. Le Clerc  
would not ap-  
prove of My-  
stical Theology  
if it favoured  
Socinianism,  
&c.

Upon some oc-  
casions he actu-  
ally has re-  
course to it.

(a) Epist.  
Liber. Pag.  
62. 65.

(b) Ibid. Pag.  
61.

(c) John, ch.  
1. B. I. v. 10.  
(d) Col. ch.  
1. v. 16, 17.

But very er-  
roneously and  
absurdly.

commend *Horace* and *Ovid*, than I do the *Mysticks*; or for that you recommend *Ovid's Metamorphoses* and *Horace's Odes*, as excellent Helps towards understanding and interpreting the Holy Scriptures.

XX. Let me intreat you, *Sir*, to deal plainly and sincerely with me: Did the Mystical Theology favour your *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Glosses, would you shew so great an abhorrence of it, as to call all Books written in that manner, by way of Contempt, Mystical? Nay, it is not observable that, even your own *Liberinus*, although he is careful not to name the word Mystical, for fear of falling under his own lash, yet that when he thought the *Socinian* Cause could be any wise supported by *Mysticks*, has actually made use of Allegorical (which in your Opinion is Mystical)

Theology? And hence it is, that as to those places of Scripture, where the Creation of the World is in the most express terms attributed to *Christ* as his work; *Liberinus*, that he might explain them in favour of the *Socinians*, does with *Socinus* and his followers, suggest that they ought to be understood of the Allegorical or Mystical Creation, and of the Mystical Operations and Creatures (which indeed he does not presume expressly to name so, but calls them (a) *New* instead of *Mystical*;) and the Reason he gives is, that which is the foundation of all Allegorical Theology,

viz. (b) *That innumerable things that were done before the Gospel did shadow out and typify those things which were to be done under the Gospel.* And accordingly these Places; *In the beginning was the word. and the word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made, &c.* And, *The World was made by him: Again, All things were created by him and for him. He is before all things, &c.* Which (c)

*St. John* and (d) *St. Paul* refer to *Christ*: If according to the declared Sense of *Liberinus* and the *Socinians*,

they be explained in other words and in proper terms, we ought to reject the literal Sense altogether, and expound them thus: "In the Mystical beginning " was the Word, and the Word was Mystically with " God, and God was Mystically the Word. All My- " stical Things were Mystically made by him; and " without him was not any Mystical thing made, " that was Mystically made. Again; The Mystical " World was Mystically made by him. And again; " All Mystical things were Mystically created by him " and

“ and for him ; and he is Mystically before all Mystical Things, and so on. Letter I.

XXI. It would make a Man smile to see those who are otherwise the greatest Despisers of Mystical Theology, forced against their will, rather than quit their Errors, to endeavour so Ridiculously to betake themselves to it in order to support their wretched Cause. Thus Monsieur *Le Clerc* then is turn'd Mystick! but as 'tis against his Will, so neither is it for any long continuance ; He knows not yet what the Mystical Theology is, which therefore he ought first to have learned from some Author, v. g. from the Preface to a Book entituled (a) *The Theology of the Heart*, and from the last Book of the Second Part thereof. He smells only at a distance that 'tis no Friend to his Erroneous Principles, and to the other superficial parts of Learning: He knows it is equally disagreeable to worldly Minds, and to the Vain and Superficial ; to the more Sensual (which is by much the greater) part of Mankind ; and even to some of good Dispositions, who are imposed upon by the Calumnies of others ; and these were sufficient Motives with him, in order to blast the Credit of my Writings, which contradict his Principles almost in every thing, most injuriously to brand them with the hateful Character of being Mystical, and to affirm, contrary to all Reason, that they treat of nothing but what's Mystical.

XXI. Thus, Sir, you make no scruple to call (b) the Reasonings and Proofs which I make use of to Demonstrate Free Will ; The Arguments evincing Original Sin and the Propagation of Souls ; the last External Events of Things which I recite ; my Analysis of the Epistle to the *Romans* ; these, I say, and many other things you take upon you (with how much justice let others judge) to call Mystical, which ought not to be accounted as any part of Mystical Theology. After such usage, if I had a mind to encounter you at your own Weapons, I might apply to you the Words of the Son of *Syrach*, *De mendacio Ineruditionis tua confundere* ; or that of *Apelles*, *Ne futor ultra Crepidam* ; or something to that purpose, as, *Ne Criticus ultra Cortices*. XXII. Proved by several Instances. (b) *Bibl. V. Pag. 432, 438, 439.*

XXIII. Here you'll say, It appears that your complaint against me, that I am angry with, and (c) explain, despiſes Critical Learning.

(c) *Bibl. V. Pag. 414.*



## Letter I.

Answered :

Archbishop  
Usher com-  
mended, and  
Erasmus.

Who was both  
a great Cri-  
tick and a  
true Lover of  
Mystical Theo-  
logy.

claim against the Criticks, is well grounded. If with *Pareus*, a famous Divine, I had absolutely affirmed, that the Devil was certainly the Author of Criticism, I might possibly have in some measure deserved your Censure. But such sober Criticks as under the Letter search for and recommend the Spirit, I not only do not find fault with, but highly respect and esteem them, and most sincerely recommend them to others : Such as among others was lately the illustrious Archbishop *Usher*, who first published and highly esteemed the Epistle of *St. Barnabas*, full throughout of Allegorical and Mystical Meanings ; and in the preceeding Age the great *Erasmus*, who scarce left his equal. He, though he was an universal Scholar, and the greatest Critick of his Age, yet he did not scruple frequently to intermix many Allegorical and Mystical Things, as so many rare and precious Gems to adorn his works, and especially throughout his excellent Paraphrase upon the New Testament ; and the same Excellent Person was also the first that published, and exceedingly recommended the Commentaries of *Arnobius* the younger on the *Psalms*, which also abound with Mystical Senses. The same Person in publishing the Works of some of the chiefest of the Fathers (such as *Irenaeus*, *Cyprian*, *Hierom*, *Hilary*, *Ambrose*, *Augustine*, &c.) so highly esteemed the Mystical things, which very often occur in 'em, that he more particularly commended and preferred them above all the rest ; and so great a lover was he of this sort of Knowledge, that if it was for nothing else, yet he would deserve Immortal Honour for the pains he took in Collating and Correcting *Origen's* Works, the greatest Mystick among the Fathers, whom upon the Account of his singular skill in the Holy Scriptures, and in every other thing, his indefatigable Labours, his admirable Vertues, and stedfast sanctity of Life, but more-especially upon the Mystical Account, he preferred almost to all the rest. And hence likewise, in the Second Chapter of his *Enchiridion*, called, *The Christian Warriour*, he lays down this Rule : Among all the Interpreters of the Holy Scriptures, love those especially WHO DEPART MOST FROM THE LETTER ; such as are chiefly after *St. Paul*, *Origen*, *Ambrose*, *Hierom*, *Augustine*. He adds : For I perceive that our Modern Divines, stick too much to the Letter, and are more intent about the captious Niceties of Words, Than in searching out the Mysteries couched under them : As if indeed *St. Paul* had not truly said,

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said, that Our Law is SPIRITUAL; I have heard of some, who are so hugely pleased with those Human Comments (consider I pray, what sort of Persons he here means) That they look upon the Interpretations of the ancients as scarce any thing but Dreams.---They grow old in the Letter, and do not endeavour to attain to the spiritual Knowledge of the Scriptures. Neither do they hear Christ in the Gospel, crying, The Flesh profiteth nothing; 'Tis the Spirit that quickeneth; and, we know because the Law is Spiritual, and not Carnal; and SPIRITUAL THINGS SHOULD BE COMPARED WITH SPIRITUAL. God was anciently worshipped in the Mount, but now the Father of Spirits will be worshipped in Spirit. And he subjoins, therefore I would not have you who are endued with a happy Genius, to rest in the barren Letter, but to hasten to the more PROFOUND MYSTERIES, and to your own unwearied Industry to join frequent and fervent PRAYER, until he that has the KEY of David, open you the Book, who shuts and no body can open the ARCANNA of the FATHER, which none knows but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal them. Shew me such Criticks now a days, and I'll be the first that shall be ready to shew them all possible Honour and Respect.

XXIV. But if any Critick reject and despise the efficient Cause it self, the Power, the Essence, and the Center of all solid Good, or, of all Realities, the adorable Spirit of God, and his Internal Operations and secret Meanings, and thereby shew himself a declared Enemy to all Mystical or Spiritual Knowledge; if he dislike the very Ideas of such Realities, and under Pretence of an aversion to Metaphysical or Platonical Ideas, endeavour to ridicule and discredit them; if he cannot so much as bear with the shadows of such things, whereby in a more gross and figurative manner, their essential Dignity is represented; and consequently if he ridicule all Allegorical Theology; if moreover he be angry with all those, however venerable for their Antiquity, or how conspicuous soever for their Sanctity, who have praised and recommended such things; so that all that remains for him to please himself with, is only to make his Remarks upon the Bark, and to Expound the Letter without the Spirit, without the Intellectual Ideas thereof, and even without the proper Allegorical explications; if such a one, I say, who, setting aside all these things, expounds the Scriptures literally only, and according

XXIV. In what Sense Criticks and Critical Learning are undervalued,

Letter I. to Grammatical, Critical, Pelagian, and Heathen Ideas, such as those of *Homer, Virgil, Horace and Ovid*, which fall infinitely short of *Plato's* Ideas; and that in so rash a manner, that whatever does not suit with his Critical Capacity, he expunges out of the Scriptures, and condemns such Mysteries as he does not understand, and then imposes his own Grammatical, Critical and Heathenish Interpretations, under the Name of *Sacred Observations, Questions and Annotations*, and the like, because forsooth the external matter, or the Bark and the Words are taken from the Holy Scriptures; such an one I will convince not by Clamour, but by Demonstration, as I have done (a) in another Place, that all his vain Critical Learning is both insufficient and absurd. But if they cannot yet see the force of my Demonstrations; I will shew them by more gross Similitudes, that they act as vainly and ridiculously; as if any one among the *Israelites* of old, who had a right to partake of any Sacrifice, and to give thereof to others, should have left the inward Substance, and taken the Skin and Hair, and Excrements only, and covered and anointed himself therewith, and then run about the Streets, crying, *A Holy Sacrifice! A Sacred Unction! A Holy Meat Offering!* That is, they were taken from the Sacred Victim in the same manner as our Criticks use to take their *Sacred Observations* from the Holy Scriptures, with which they feed themselves and others, much after the manner that they do Swine with Bran, leaving the Substance and the Flower of the Corn, as if it was nothing but meer insignificant Dust, wholly untouched.

(a) *Oeconomy*,  
Vol. III.  
Chap. 14.

Some Particular Instances  
of Mr. Le Clerc's Disingenuity.

But to be more Particular.

XXV. The first Instance; (b) *Bibliotheque Universelle*, where you introduce me in the *Oeconomy*, promising to prove what I advance in *Theology, Philosophy, Metaphysics, Physics, Ethics and Politicks*, by Demonstrations as Plain and Evident as any in *Geometry*; you add, That I do not expect that the force of such Demonstrations will be understood by those Readers who shall view them only by the Light of Human Reason; that 'tis absolutely necessary that they bring somewhat of (b) *F A I T H* along with them, without which I affirm, they will

(b) Pag. 414.  
415.



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will understand nothing of them ; and, that I believe that even the unlearned will be able to understand every thing that I have advanced, except some few things in the first and second Book, provided they will give but Attention, and RECEIVE the Truths which I promise to teach them with FAITH. Now they that either do not know me, or dare not suspect you to be one of those that industriously set themselves to invent Stories the better to set off their own Wit, will hardly be able to forbear Laughing, when they hear, that I undertake to Demonstrate certain Truths, provided my Demonstrations be received with Faith. But if there be any who do not look upon me as the greatest Blockhead in Nature, but rather think that I understand what Demonstration is as well as you, and possibly as well as any other ; if they observe that from the beginning of the work, I suppose my Reader to be a meer Sceptick ; they will no longer doubt but that you have very grossly misrepresented me, and when they shall see in the Series of the Work, that I draw no conclusions but what were Implicitely contained in, and which naturally flowed from my Principles (which is to Demonstrate ;) and that when my Principles themselves are not at first sight sufficiently clear and evident, I deduce them from others, as I do these from others again, and soon, until I bring them down to such first Principles as admit of no Dispute (which many own they have observed in my Writings ;) I say, after they have observed these things, they will wonder to see that you have so little Prudence, and so great an Inclination to Cavil, as for the sake of such a senseless Jest, to give so clear a Proof, either of your Ignorance or Partiality. But the Crime, it seems, is that I named and commended Faith, in order to perceive and understand things Intellectual ! I'll explain the matter in a few Words. We sometimes meet with Demonstrations, the force whereof many, and even such as in other respects are very Ingenious Men, cannot by any means comprehend. For instance, Monsieur des Cartes in some of his Writings did certainly Demonstrate the Immateriality of the Soul, and the Existence of God ; and yet some very learned Geometricians have (a) acknowledged that though they had often and attentively read his Demonstrations, they could never see the force of them. At this Day there are some Cartesianes, and others, who do not understand the Demonstrations about the Liberty of God concerning things

This Calculus  
refuted.

(a) Obj. VI.  
in Med. Cart.

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indifferent, and about his sufficiency, although they naturally flow from this Principle, that God is an infinitely perfect Being, and consequently that he does not in the least stand in need of any other besides himself; and therefore that he alone is self-sufficient; so that if he has the Ideas of other things, and made them, it was a matter wholly indifferent to him to think of them and to make them; and consequently, that he himself was first indifferent as to such things: And yet these things they do not comprehend. Who does not understand these Principles, that God cannot deny himself and his own Properties, neither inwardly within himself, nor by any external Word or Act? But how few are there, who see that it Necessarily and Demonstratively follows from thence, that the Works of God have no tendency to Annihilation, and that they are not inactive, dark, contrary to, destructive of, and made to Torment one another; and consequently that they are Permanent, Active, Luminous, Harmonious, Happy and Glorious; and that therefore the World was not made in that disorderly and unhappy State in which we see it at present; but that all the present Evils and Miseries which we observe therein, proceeds from some sinful and degenerate Author? Now 'tis evident that many do not apprehend the force of these Demonstrations, with the same ease and clearness that they Conceive and are Convinced that God cannot Lie. And the same thing may happen still the more, according as the Truths which we undertake to Demonstrate are at a greater distance from their first Principles, and as they are more shocking and contrary to the Prejudices of Education. What Remedy then shall we make use of to assist Reason to see and perceive the force of such Demonstrations? Some prescribe Attention: and so do I. But they, of whom we speak, say that they did and still do apply themselves with all possible Attention; but that nevertheless they cannot apprehend the force of such Demonstrations. What can they do more? Some prescribe other means: What I would offer is this. I would have the Reader not to give his Mind to contemplate Reason only, but to follow it also; that is, that he would practice those things which his Reason tells him he ought to do, before he proceed to other Demonstrations. For Example, If any one had really a Mind to understand any intricate Mathematical Demonstration, the only way would

would be to take a Scale and Compasses, or Pen and Ink, and Delineate it upon Paper, or trace it in some other Characters, through all its several Steps, as he reads it; otherwise, without some such Practical means as this, he will quickly lose the Thread, or not rightly apprehend the force of the Demonstration. The Case is the same as to Intellectual and Spiritual Matters: After one is convinced by Reason, or by any other means, that there is a God, and that he is the Omnipotent and Bountiful Author of all Good, and of all Light; the first thing that Reason dictates for him to do, in order to prepare and fit him to go on to other things, is heartily to praise God, and to give him Thanks, and in an humble confidence that he will hear him, to wait and pray for his good and luminous Operations in and upon his Heart. Either I am wholly mistaken in my self, or this is really and truly the Case. My Reason shews me beyond any possibility of doubt, that I ought to desire *Light* and whatever is *Good*, and that from *God*, and in my *Soul*; because he is the Author of Light, and of every thing that is Good, and I on the other side am his Handy-work, and my Soul the subject made and adapted to receive his Light; and that I ought to do so with a *Believing Mind*, because God is Benevolent and Omnipotent. Now this Disposition of Soul, whereby she sincerely Offers and Trusts herself into the Hands of God, desiring him and his Light, or, *That recourse and shelter which a thankful and believing Soul, breathing after God, the Fountain of all Goodness, takes in him*, is what I called FAITH; which Faith, or humble Disposition of the Soul, resigning and entrusting itself wholly into the Hands of God, does not produce Philosophical or Ideal and Artificial Demonstrations; but the Faculties of the Soul, and Reason itself, are only thereby more and more resigned and exposed to the powerful Operations, and to the sweet Influences of God; who in consequence thereof enlivens, invigorates and enables and makes them fit afterwards to perform their several Functions in the easiest and best manner, and to receive the true Ideas of things Intellectual, either by immediate Divine Illumination, or by the help of such Light to form, conceive, examine and weigh what is in such Ideas, and what necessarily follows from them: That is, by this means, a Soul is made capable of perceiving and feeling the force of Intellectual



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\* Pref. to the  
Oeconomy.

lectual Demonstrations. Now, good Mr. Critick, pray tell me whether I have explained my self to your Capacity, or no? Do these Things in your Language import the same Thing as, *to promise Demonstrations provided one will receive them with Faith, or in case he will joyn but a little Faith to them?* Or did I express my self there so obscurely that an attentive Reader could not find out my meaning? As if I had not expressly said, *\* We approach to God by the Spirit of Faith; whence after that we are made conformable to him in the bottom of our Soul, our Mind and Reason, and all our Faculties are rendred able and fit, every one in their degree, to EXPRESS (or to Excite in us Ideally) the Truths, the Characters or Representations of all God's wonderful Works, and of all those Things that are in himself, and in his own Divine Arbitrary Conception; so that the ACTIVITY of REASON imperceptibly acquires a bent or aptitude to REPRESENT the manner how God conceived and made all Things. That there is in us a FACULTY, which is capable of REPRESENTING and expressing most CLEARLY and EASILY THE IDEAS and WORKS of GOD, and of SEEING their REASONS and Beauties; which Faculty, when it approaches to God, it receives by the Light of Faith (or by the Light which God imparts to a Soul that trusts in and resigns itself to him) a DISPOSITION to PERCEIVE his TRUTHS and his WORKS, and much more to the same purpose. From all which its evident that I shewed plainly enough, how Faith, or a sincere and faithful approach to God, shining and discovering himself in the Soul, disposes and enables the activity of Reason to excite in itself Ideas conformable to the Ideas in God, and to the Things themselves, and to understand the Truths and Reasons of Things. But this is Anti-Pelagian, and therefore what you hate, as is that likewise which I expressly observed there, that the Pelagians, and the literal Criticks, and those that deny the Operations of God in the Soul, are therefore unfit and incapable of perceiving Things Intellectual, because their Reason is Sick, clouded and wholly corrupted. Now because you might possibly think that these Things touched you, was it therefore necessary that, for Revenge sake, you should pervert and ridicule my Sense and Words, which if rightly understood, are clear and Orthodox, and contain nothing but very excellent and wholesome Precepts? Has not St. Paul before*

fore me, observed that the Reason why the Philosophers of the World were encompassed with *Darkness*, and became *vain* in their *Imaginations*, is this, because that *when they knew God, they Glorified him not as God*, as the Author of Light and of every good Thing, to whom they ought to have had recourse; and because they were ungrateful, and *vainly* trusted and relied upon *their own Reasonings*, deserting their *Blessed Creator*? Would to God that every Philosopher would submit his Reason to be cured and illuminated by this Divine Faith; and that every Writer had such a share of Human Faith or Integrity, as might enable him to relate the Words or Actions of Others Impartially!

XXVI. With the like Fidelity, and in a Jocular and Scornful way you say, \* *That my Metaphysicks cannot be perfectly understood in many Places, unless one be admitted into the Divine Darkness, and into the Contemplation of the Principle of God.* Whereas you ought to have said that my Metaphysicks explain some divine Things, which may indeed be well conceiv'd Ideally, but which none can sensibly Experience in himself, unless God, who is our Principle, discover himself to him after a manner which to us is now dark and obscure; which, as I observ'd by the by, is what the Mysticks mean by that Expression, *To be admitted into the Divine Darkness, and into the Contemplation of their Principle* (not the Principle of God, as you erroneously take it.) But all this is nothing but what other Metaphysicians have said, or much to the same purpose. For when, for instance, they demonstrate, that Man's greatest Felicity consists in the Contemplation of God; this indeed is what every Body sufficiently comprehends; but yet all Men must undoubtedly acknowledge, that none can actually enjoy and possess that Happiness without the supernatural Help and Operation of God, which to us in this state is yet dark and obscure. Thus again, in another † Book, I have employed a whole Chapter about the Divine Eternity, and that which we partake from thence, the force of which Demonstrations is indeed easily perceiv'd Ideally, but the lively Experience of the Thing itself cannot be communicated to us, as I there observ'd, *Unless it please the Supreme Mind, which sustains us, to joyn himself to us according to the Plenitude or full Extent of our Thought.* Now tho' the short Line of our Experience cannot Fathom these Things,

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Rom. i.

XXVI. The

Second Instance;

\* Biblioth.

Pag. 418.

That my Metaphysicks are unintelligible.

Refuted.

† Cogit. Rational.

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Things, yet some Great and Ingenious Men have set so high a value upon that Chapter, that they prefer it to all the rest of the Book, and some have got it even by Heart. But these were such Men as were persuaded that Divine Things, instead of being ridicul'd and banter'd, ought to be studied with Reverence and Attention.

XXVII. *Third Instance;*

\* *Biblioth.*

Pag. 427.

*He misrepresents Mr. Poi-  
ret's Notion  
of Faith.*

XXVII. It will also undoubtedly appear ridiculous to many as you \* tell it, viz. That I endeavour to prove, *That Faith is God himself.* But this would not have appeared so absurd if you had fairly told your Readers, That according to my Notion Faith may be consider'd either on the part of Man, as he contributes something to it which God requires of him, and in this Sense Faith is a fiducial surrender or resignation of all our Faculties, of the Desire, the Understanding, the Will and Acquiescence to God himself: Or that it may be likewise consider'd on the part of God, as he operates in the Faculties of a Man that resigns himself to him with a filial confidence, and produces his Light, or insinuates himself, and his Love into them; so that in this Sense, that Faith which is from God, is God himself, irradiating and producing Light, Love and Tranquility in the Soul; and in this respect God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, are said to be in, to dwell in, and to live in Man by Faith; and that this Faith is not the Work of Man: Now these Things, as they are self-evident, so neither will they appear absurd to any intelligent Person, when the matter is fairly stated to him.

XXVIII. *A Fourth Instance; He explains Mr. Poi-  
ret's Notion of Faculties but in part.*

(a) *Oecon. Creat. chap.*

6. §. 19.

(b) *Ibid. §.*

22.

(c) *Biblioth. Pag. 422.*

XXVIII. I gave two Definitions of Faculties, one of the (a) Thing, which I said wanted an *Explication*, for as much as it expresses the Nature of the Thing; the other of the Name, that every one might know what I mean by the Word Faculty, and (b) afterwards I tell my Readers that to me the Word Faculty is the same Thing as a *Power of doing or acting*; or more generally, that 'tis a *Capacity of acting and receiving or suffering*. But you, (c) after you have given the Reader hopes, that I would shew what a Faculty is, and in what Sense the Word is to be taken, omit the nominal Definition, which is accommodated to every Capacity, and produce only the other, which without its Explication (which follows there) must needs appear very obscure; that so your Readers being put in hopes of a clear Definition, and then

finding



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finding all of a sudden nothing but obscurity, may find matter to laugh at; much after the same manner as your Juglers, who by slight of Hand convey some Things out of Sight, and then all of a sudden shew something else, to amuse and please those that look on. And as such Buffoons often repeat those Tricks which they think will be most taking with the Croud; even so you also do often and unexpectedly bring out from behind the Scene something Mystical; but you happen to do it so often and so awkwardly, that to an indifferent observer your management cannot but appear very nauseous and ridiculous.

XXIX. In the same ludicrous manner, after you have prepared your Readers to hear something serious and sublime of me about the Divinity of the Soul, all of a sudden you \* introduce me as asking my self by Name, and with the Appellation of Sir; and then presently, omitting my self, Answering others, and that without being asked, as if they had in that interim sprung up like Mushrooms. Now these are such ridiculous Suggestions, that he that peruses my Writings will find that I have not given the least occasion for them; I only mention a Difficulty as proposed by my Readers to themselves; and to shew how absurd it is, I give the same Answer as † *Claubergius* did, thinking it deserved no other. 'Tis strange, sure, that Ingenious Men should be so blinded and led away by Prejudice and Passion, as not to see that by such little Patchings and Prevarications, all that they can do is only to shew how Ingenious they are at contriving and piecing together a Fools-Coat.

XXX. But then sometimes you mix some serious Things, and give pretty fair accounts of others, that so your Readers being for some little time employed about Grave Matters, may the better relish your Mystical Jest, which every now and then recur with you: Thus after having premised one, you go on next to || treat more seriously of the Holy Trinity, namely, to help out the *Socinians*, against whom you say I have exclaimed, as if they denied the Sacred Trinity in that Sense that I explained it, which you in their Name deny. Let us see then, and, since you are their Advocate, try if you can make them acknowledge the following particulars, which contain my Sense of the matter. 1. That there is actually in the Eternal Deity an adorable Trinity, which the Holy Scriptures express by the Terms of the Father, the Son or the Word,

and

XXIX. A Fifth Instance; He endeavours to ridicule what I had said about the Nature of the Soul.

\* Biblioth. Pag. 428.

† In Exercit. de Deo.

XXX. A Sixth Instance; He maintains that the *Socinians* do not deny the Trinity in that Sense that I explained it in.

|| Biblioth. Pag. 430.

The Truth of this Allegation enquired into.

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and the Holy Ghost. 2. That the Trinity, as well as every Thing else in God, is incomprehensible to our finite Understanding; but that besides all those infinite and innumerable Realities in the Deity which we do not comprehend; one of them, as near as our narrow and finite Capacity can conceive is this, That the Father is the desire of enjoying himself essential to the Deity; That the Son is the Living Image and Light of the Deity; and that the Holy Spirit is the essential Love, Acquiescence and Joy, or the ineffable Complacency of the Father in the Son. If the *Socinians* scruple to own these Things, they thereby shew that their Sentiments differ from mine about the Holy Trinity. But if they do admit these Things, then I Congratulate you and them upon it: Nor ought they therefore to be looked upon as wholly Innocent or Excuseable, if they should alledge that they only denied the Holy Trinity before, because no Body had clearly enough explained it to them; and which if they had seen it proposed in this manner, they would not have denied. Such an excuse, I say, is vain and frivolous. For oftentimes God reveals some things concerning himself or his Works, more obscurely to Men, as well that we may shew him the same Honour and Respect which we pay to Men of Probity, whom we believe in Things that we have not seen; as that being Conscious of the narrowness of our Understanding, and diffident of our selves, we may by continual Humility bridle our Luxuriant Reason, and apply to him for his Divine Light and Help to enable us to understand such Things, as far as is necessary for our Salvation. Now, if some from a Principle of blind Pride will not *first*, address themselves to God, and implore his Divine Light and Help; but Laughing at such Things as Fanatical Principles, and boldly trusting to their own Understanding as self-sufficient, do therefore *secondly*, refuse to admit what God reveals, because it appears repugnant to their wretched Understanding, endeavouring to comprehend it by their own weak strength; and if *thirdly*, they presume to substitute the Works of their own Corrupted Understanding, the Creatures for Creator (as the *Socinians* do, who are guilty of all these three, placing the Creatures or the Created gifts of God in the room of the Holy Spirit) would they therefore be excuseable, if, when God should afterwards tell them, behold those Things which out of Pride you will not ask of my Grace; those Things relating

*Reasons why Things are sometimes revealed obscurely.*

*And why Men refuse to believe Mysteries.*

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relating to me which you therefore reject, because your Proud, and as you think self-sufficient Understanding, which I was willing to humble and compel to seek my help, cannot comprehend them; and finally those Things in whose Place you have substituted the Creatures; they are even such, that if they be explained to you in another manner, and in other Terms, you will find your self so fully convinced of the Truth of them, as many others are already, that it will be impossible for you to reject or doubt of them any more: Such Persons, I say, if they should at last believe these Things, will they therefore be excusable from the guilt of Pride, Incredulity, and either of Idolatry or Injustice against God and Divine Things, in whose Place they set up meer Creatures? Judge you, Sir, in this Case, and apply it to the Socinians, whose first and chiefest Crime is not so much in that they deny several Mysteries, as in this, that dissembling and even denying their own Corruption, and depending wholly upon the Strength of their own Corrupted Reason, they look and seek for Help and Light from that, and not from the Gracious Light and Operation of God.

*None of which can excuse any one for not believing them; But on the contrary condemn him.*

XXXI. I am not much troubled at what you say, when you \* affirm that my Discourse about Liberty is either partly Mystical (that is, either what you do not understand, or do not like because it makes against Pelagianism) or partly what has been said by others long since. It was sometimes objected to Des Cartes, that 'twas no such new Thing to say, *that he thinks*; and that every Body knew and said the same Thing long before him. He Answered that it was true indeed; but that none before him had observed that that was the first Principle of all Philosophy; that from thence every Thing else might be deduced; and that he had first done it. Those that will attentively read my Work, will see that whatever regards Grace, Predestination, the Justice of God, or any other of his Dealings with Men, is easily and naturally deduced and accounted for from my Explication of Liberty; That what † others had said upon those and the like Heads, are more general, more obscure, and not so clearly deduced, and therefore have proved almost wholly ineffectual for those Ends: On the contrary I have been more particular, and have by the help of my Principles explained and solved such Difficulties as have been looked upon by others as inexplicable. And I

XXXI. A Seventh Instance: That what is said about Liberty is either Mystical, or what others have said before.

\* Bibl. p. 433.

† See Vossii. Hist. Pelag. Lib. 3. Part. 1. Thes. 2. Pag. 293.

will



## Letter I.

will be bold to say, that if others had explained Liberty in that Sense that I have done, neither *Pelagianism*, nor any other Capital Heresy about Grace could ever have been maintained by any but the most Profligate of Mankind. These Things your Treatment forces me to declare, and at the same to desire you, because you so often tell me that what I say has been said before by others, to look into your own Writings, and consider, that if all that you have stolen from others without so much as mentioning their Names was taken away, whether *Æsop's* Fable of the Crow, might not in a great measure be applied to your self.

XXXII. The Eighth Instance; That Man before the Fall could form a Body like his own.

\* Biblioth. Pag. 435.  
† Ibid. Pag. 426.

XXXII. I know not whence you should affirm, \* that Man before the Fall, could, in my Opinion, by the Power of his Imagination form another Body like unto his own: When yet my meaning is, that the Imagination only concurs to such a Formation but in part and as a concomitant Cause. I am also in doubt whether it was not to excite Laughter in your Readers (because otherwise you ridicule all Familiarity with God) that you say † I maintain, *That 'tis but Labour in vain to endeavour to penetrate into Nature, without first recovering a Familiarity with God; and that in order to that 'tis necessary to know the Internal Things of the Deity.* Surely the internal Things of the Deity, his Thoughts and Ideas are the original Patterns and efficient Causes of all Things; and therefore in order to know Things made by their Causes, or to discover the Causes of Things, there is no other way but to look for them in God: Now that none can possibly discover them, unless God himself is pleased to communicate them to him, is so evident that it needs no Proof.

XXXIII. A Ninth Instance; That I make use of the Lives of some Saints in explaining Things.

|| Biblioth. Pag. 436.

XXXIII. When you alledge || that I describe the Primitive Glories of the Creation from the Life and Visions of St. Teresa, in order to make such Things appear ridiculous to Protestants and Philosophers; you omit to mention that I deduced the same Thing before from God's Attributes, and established it upon several Good Reasons, and then confirm'd it from eight or ten Places of Scripture, to all which, for Illustration sake, I added the Words of St. Teresa, thinking it much better to illustrate Divine Things by the Testimony of such a Pious Soul, than with you to attempt to explain the Holy Scriptures from *Virgil*, and *Horace*, *Martial*, and *Ovid*, and such like Authors, which you

you and other Criticks usually consult upon such occasions as so many Oracles.

Letter I.

XXXIV. Having by these and the like Methods, either perverted the Sense, or curtailed the Explications given in my Writings as well as those of others, and being, I suppose, conscious of your guilt in both these Respects, in an Admonition prefixed to the fifth Tome of your *Bibliothèque*, you attempt (by several frivolous Excuses) to anticipate the Complaints, which you could not but see that such gross Frauds would bring upon you. Thus, for instance, as to the first, you pretend that possibly in many places you might not perfectly apprehend the meaning of some Authors, because they make use of *confused Ideas* and *Improper Expressions*; or because of their *long Parentheses* and *incoherent Reasonings*; or because they often use *Equivocal Expressions*, and are sometimes *Ignorant* of their own *Language*; but that these are not the true Reasons why you have mistaken and misrepresented the Sense of my Writings (as well as that of some others) is evident in that many others of equal or better Judgment and Penetration than your self, have read and understood, and found great satisfaction in them, without ever raising such Objections against them; and because you have also exposed and misrepresented others, who are allowed to be Masters of a most clear and eloquent Expression; so that the Reason why you treat me and others in such a manner, cannot be so much those which you assign, as that I and those Authors whom you traduce, are adversaries to the Socinian Errors; witness the Character you give of that excellent and elegant Discourse of the Bishop of Meaux, concerning the Holy Trinity, which as to the manner you call a (a) sound of empty Words, and as to the matter, a heap of Chimeras. I have already pointed out other more probable Causes, both general and particular, why you act in this manner, as also the Reason why many things seem obscure to you, when I told you, that those who dissembling the Corruption of their own Reason, and trulling to their own Strength, will neither turn to God, nor implore his internal help, are not at all in a capacity to perceive and understand things Spiritual. But if, as you confess, you did not rightly understand such matters, why then did not you leave them to your Colleague to manage? May we not suspect that you was afraid he would not sufficiently Ridicule, but rather

XXXIV. Mr. Le Clerc's Reasons why he may have mistaken other Men's Writings:

Are not the true Reasons why he Misrepresents them.

The true Reason is because they oppose the Socinian Doctrines.

(a) Entret. p. 302.

Other Reasons also assigned.

Letter I.  ther Commend, what you hated as contrary to your Erroneous Opinions? Or if you found any Difficulties or obscure Places toward the beginning of my Work, why did you not take my Advice, and begin and read the last Books first?

XXXV. Mr. Le Clerc's Pled for suppressing and curtailing several matters Material in other Mens Writings,

Refuted.

(a) Entretien, p. 191, & 204.

XXXV. As to the second, namely your suppressing several things in your Accounts, which had you mentioned them, would have set matters in a fair and clear Light. You alledge, as an excuse, the narrow compals that you was confined to; and that no body will have any just occasion to complain of you on that score; *But those of an Inferiour Rank among the Learned, and such as having read but little, and being but ill acquainted with the Affairs of the World, entertain some singular and uncommon Opinions, and look upon their own Fancies and Inventions as the certain effects of a Divine Inspiration.* Now though all these things were true, yet they are nothing to the purpose; for if you pretend to give an Account of such Persons, or their Writings, you ought in justice to quote their Words as faithfully as those of the most learned Criticks, who have read every thing except what they ought to read, and who know every thing except what they ought to know; and finally, who called their own Socinian Errors, and even the most pernicious of them, *(a) Lights which God has bestowed upon them, and admirable means which the Providence of God makes use of to reclaim others from Errors.* As to what you intnuate of me, that I am but of an inferiour form among the Learned, I am not only not at all displeased with it; but I truly and sincerely acknowledge and confess that I have scarce yet learned as I ought, the true Elements of solid Knowledge; all my Ambition is most earnestly to beseech God, that he would, out of his great Mercy, and by the Assistance of his Grace, prepare and receive me into his School to teach me the same. And as to your Learning, which in your Opinion is beyond all exception, I do not indeed envy you, nor is it needful that I should give my Opinion of it in this place; I only pray that God would keep me and all good Men from ever being tainted therewith. What Books I shall read, or what worldly Affairs 'tis fit for me to know, I shall scarce enquire of those Criticks, who are yet ignorant themselves in this, that 'tis better much to read a few solid and instructive Books; to preserve a few Pearls and precious Stones; and to look inwardly into the



The secret Recesses of the Soul, and there to seek for true and solid Knowledge, than to gather infinite heaps of trash and Rubbish, and be unavoidably reduced to the necessity either of being smothered with the Dust, or starved upon the Husks. If you had observed this Rule, you would have preferred the small (but golden) Treatises of *Herman Herbert*, the first Founder of your Sect, before all the great *Episcopius's* and *Cursuleus's*, the illustrious *Hammond's*, the incomparable *Grotius's*, the Voluminous Collections of the *Frates Poloni*, and innumerable others of the same kind: But as great a Reader as you are, I cannot perceive that you have so much as ever seen any of that good Man's Writings; though 'twas from him that the first Remonstrants took all that was good among them; nay, you seem not only not to know this admirable Man, and to be forgetful of your own Original, but even most of your way now-a-days have deserted him, and maintain Notions and Doctrines quite contrary to his Divine Writings and Principles. Had you, *Sir*, who seem to glory in the extent of your Knowledge, as if nothing, how foreign soever, had escaped you; while at the same time you seem to slight and despise the nearest, the chiefest and most necessary Things, and such as relate even to your own Party; had you, I say, read and digested this Author's Writings (a) alone, and let alone all others, you would have had no Reason to repent, and might now have been able to see, that one may profit more by carefully reading one good Author, than by being at the pains to read a thousand trifling ones: For as that Ground, which has every Day new Seed cast into it, can never produce a good Crop; so a Soul which is daily distracted with an infinite variety of trifling Matters, can never improve to any purpose in solid Knowledge: This is only to be acquir'd by little Reading, frequent Meditation, earnest Prayer, assiduous Exercise, and by withdrawing and separating ourselves from the vain Objects and Ideas of the World. It is enough for a Scholar, in this School, to know of the World, (b) That all that is therein, is the Lust of the Flesh, and the lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, and that all such things perish with those that esteem and lust after them, while he that studies aright to know nothing but God and himself in the Spirit of *Christ*, shall abide for ever, although for the present he be ridiculed and laughed at by the

(a) *Herman Herbert.*

(b) 1 John, c. 2. v. 16.

Letter I.

worldly wise, who coveting to have their Minds filled and puffed up with the vain Air of Empty, Perishable and Chymerical Trifles, mock at those who affirm, that nothing can fill or satisfy them, but the Eternal Spirit of *Christ* himself, as Mad-Men or Enthusiasts.

XXXVI. His  
Change  
of Enthusiasm.

XXXVI. Thus in your sixth Tome, with much satisfaction, you take notice how a certain Disputant calls me an Enthusiast, and in the Index, again, you are sure not to forget to mention *Poiret the Enthusiast Philosopher*. But, according to your usual Fidelity, in your Quotations, you omit mentioning the Answer of his Antagonist (though you give an Account likewise of the Contents of his Book) who

Answered.

told him, That in Philosophical Matters (about which the Controversy was) *Poiret* alone was preferable to Ten such as he: But this would have taken away the Reproach of Philosophical Enthusiasm, which you would so fain fix upon me; it would have frustrated the end which you proposed to your self in publishing that Character of me, which could be nothing else but to make the World slight and despise my Writings under that Notion. Should I take the pains to Collect all the fine Epithets that others have bestowed upon you, how many Pages might not I fill with those Encomiums? But I look upon it as a sign of a mean Soul to rake into such a Dunghill, or to endeavour by such means to blast any Man's Reputation. But to shew you how little Truth there is in your borrowed Reflexion, I here publicly Challenge you to shew me so much as one that has writ so clearly and so strongly against Enthusiasm in Philosophy, and against Fanatical Enthusiasm in Theology, as I have done. You cannot but know that some Philosophers, especially of the Moderns, have endeavoured to maintain that every Natural Act is the immediate Act of God; that Human Reason and its Ideas; yea, that Extension and Figures perceived by the Eye, is God himself, his essential Light, and his very Substance; and that by these we are admitted into a Familiarity with God, and maintain a sweet Intercourse with him, with many other things of the like Nature, which they have writ largely upon and have published their Meditations to the World, and which deserve rightly enough to be called Philosophical Enthusiasm: These things, I say, you know, and also that I have fully Answered and Re-

And is Chal-  
lenged to name  
any one that  
has writ so  
clearly against  
Enthusiasm as  
Mr. Poiret  
has done.

Both as to  
Philosophy,

tured

tuted them in the first Book of my Oeconomy, which you have read, and also in the Preliminary Dissertation to my *Cogitations* of God; where I have clearly Demonstrated, that Reason (especially as 'tis active) and the Corporeal Senses, can never rise so high as to have any familiarity or intercourse with God himself; but only with his Effects, his Pictures and Images, which are of the created kind; and in the Ninth Chapter of the *Oeconomy of the Co-operation*, I have so clearly vindicated Theology from the Imputation of Fanatical Enthusiasm, that I have evidently Demonstrated, that those that are not perfectly dead to themselves, and to all the Lusts and Propensions of their corrupt Nature, are so far from having any Reason to boast of the Spirit of *Christ* dwelling and reigning in them, that they are not yet capable of receiving him. But that we ought not by Purification to aspire after the same, that true Christians, that is, those that have already received of God the Gifts, the Principles and the Blessings of Divine Faith, Hope and Charity, and of all other solid Christian Vertues, that they, I say, cannot truly and in a proper way be made more and more Partakers of the SPIRIT of *CHRIST*; and finally, that they are not the Temples, the Tabernacles, the Dwelling-Places of *GOD*, of *CHRIST*, and of the HOLY SPIRIT, who Dwells, Abides, Lives, Acts, Reigns and Teaches in them, so that at last they abound, and are filled with all the fulness of God; these things, I say, (which you and the Modern Pelagians and Socinians deny and ridicule) which are the express Words and sacred Promises of God in the Holy Scripture, I cannot without Impiety, I no where have, and I hope never shall deny them. And if this be what by way of Derision you call Enthusiasm; if this be what you reproach me with under that Character; because *Christ* was exposed to the shameful Death of the Cross, with the Mock Title of a King, I shall not therefore the less acknowledge and receive him as a Lord and King, ruling and governing by his Spirit in the Souls of Men; nor will I be ashamed openly to acknowledge that I most earnestly pray, and firmly hope for the Gift of his Spirit to quicken, actuate and govern me in the way everlasting. Yea, Lord, in thee have I hoped; let me not be confounded for ever: Let thy mercy come upon me, O Lord; thy Salvation according to thy word, and I will put to silence those that reproach me with evil words;

And Theology.

Who ought not to boast of the Spirit of Christ.

And who they are that truly aspire after the same.

Spiritual Religion mistaken for Enthusiasm,

and maintain'd against all the Artifices of mistaken Men.



## Letter I.

words; because I have trusted in thy words. Let me rejoice in thy Salvation, and let thy good Spirit of Power sustain me; and then I shall not be ashamed if I be ranked, by vain Men, among Fanaticks; nor if they look upon my Writings as the Productions of Enthusiasm. O may it please the Divine Majesty, that as the Heavens, so likewise the Earth may be filled with such Enthusiasts, that so the will of God may be done in Earth as it is in Heaven; and that the new Jerusalem may Descend to us from Heaven prepared with the Gifts of the Spirit of Christ, as a Bride adorn'd for the Bridegroom; and that God may pitch his Tabernacle among Men, and dwell with them, so that they may be his People and be their God, their God with them, and all in all! This happy State, Sir, I heartily wish, notwithstanding all you have done to make me appear Ridiculous to others, you may at last attain to. I bear no Malice in my Heart; for how ill so ever you have recompens'd my Services, yet 'tis well known (I speak the Truth and Lie not) that upon several occasions I have often so fenc'd and mitigated the Minds of some Good Men, who had but a very mean Opinion of you, because they thought you had treated some Divine and Spiritual Matters in too bold and irreverent a manner. I urg'd that we ought not to load every one with all the ill Consequences which naturally flow, or may be deduced, from the Principles that he espouses; and that therefore, for Example, if some did not acknowledge the Grace of God, and the internal Operations of his Spirit; if they thought that God did not immediately work in us to will and to do; if they thought that the Holy Spirit of Christ was not actually given to all the Members of his Body, (that is, to all true Christians) and that it neither communicated Life, nor produced any of its Operations in them; I say, I alledged, that though some might hold such Notions, and thereby did what in them lay to banish God and his Spirit from them, yet it did not follow that they denied the Existence of either; and that to deny the Operation of God and his Spirit in us, is not a thing peculiar to them, but even common to all others, who acknowledging the thing in Words and in their Judgment, and at the same time following the Lusts of their own Inclinations, do in effect reject the gracious Presence and Operations of the Holy Spirit of God; which is what may be called practical *Pelagianism* and *Atheism*,  
a thing

Good return'd  
for Evil.

That we ought  
to judge  
charitably of  
others.

The Reason  
why?

a thing so common that but few can plead exception from it. So that upon the whole, and even for this very Reason, it becomes us to look with a more compassionate regard upon those that are fallen into Errors then is usual; seeing what they deny in Theory only, the same do we all in our Practice, and are therefore before the impartial Tribunal of God so much the more inexcusable than they, as we know more. These things I mention, lest the laying open the Errors of others should raise Hatred and Contempt against them, rather than Christian Compassion, and their own Amendment; which last I heartily wish may be your Case. And the better to convince you and the World how much you stand in need of both, what little stress ought to be laid upon your Testimony in matters which either do not agree with, or which contradict your Notions, and that no body ought to be prevailed upon to forbear reading the Writings of others upon your Character; I shall here by way of Supplement, to what I have observed with relation to my own Writings give a few Instances of your Candor in representing the Writings and Sentiments of some other Illustrious Men, both Ancient and Modern.

Letter I.

*The Application to Mr. Le Clerc.*

*The occasion he has of Compassion and Amendment exemplified in his Treatment of several*

*other Authors both Ancient and Modern.*

I shall begin with the Moderns.

XXXVII. Upon opening your Book by chance at the Bookseller's-Shop, I observed the following Instances, which I conceive, without any further Enquiry, will be sufficient to caution others how they rely upon your Testimony.

1. A certain worthy Person writ a Book of *The Truth of the Christian Religion*, in so elegant a Style, and in so clear a Method, that if you have not given a faithful Account thereof, you cannot plead obscurity or ambiguity in his Expression, as you have done to others; and he has handled his Subject with that Moderation, and with such Strength of Argument, that nothing but a certain Moroseness in your Temper, or the manifest difference between your Sentiments and his, could have prevailed with you alone to deny him that Applause which all others allow to be his due. This Gentleman, however you have ventured, without any Provocation, to attack, (as you do almost every body else) once and again; the first (a) time, upon an Argument for which you might better have fallen out

*And first of the Moderns. XXXVII. How Mr. Le Clerc has treated M. Abadie.*

*(1.) He finds fault with his Book of the Truth of the Christian Religion.*

*Entrée, p. 273.*



Letter I. with any other than with him; and the (a) second time, in order to contradict what he advanced in Answer to *Spinoza's* Objections against *Moses* the Writer of the *Pentateuch*; for both which you have paid sufficiently since. For in the (b) second Edition of his Book, he has answered you in such manner, and so home, that though he uses great Moderation, yet you cannot but evidently see the Inadvertency, the Insufficiency and the Temerity of all your Critical Learning; and besides, he has also plainly (c) proved (what we are chiefly to take Notice of) upon you, that you have ascribed things to him which he denies to be his, and that in your (d) Quotations of the Holy Scripture, you often times leave out such Parts and Passages as make most against you.

(a) Ib. p. 267. XXXVIII. But (2.) instead of being taught by such  
 (b) Ib. p. 280. a Modest Correction to be more upon your Guard, you  
 XXXVIII. (2.) grow more enraged against the same Author; and  
 Mr. LeClerc's therefore when afterwards to his first two Treatises  
 Misrepresentations of another Treatise he publicly added a third concerning the DIVINITY of JESUS CHRIST, you give an Epitome  
 written by the of that excellent Book in your *Bibliothèque* in such a  
 same Author, manner, that 'tis truly amazing you never considered  
 Tom. xv. that your Readers would be very much put to it to  
 Bibl. Univers. determine, whether Falseness or Malice had the  
 p. 366. Ascendant of you when you writ it? I shall not examine  
 19 379. why you take all Opportunities to snarl at those  
 Authors, who have most solidly refuted the *Socinian* Errors; nor why you attack them in those Parts of their Writings chiefly that relate to the *Socinian* Controversy; which surely is very imprudent in one that, though he has been always suspected, yet never would own himself a *Socinian*: Nor will I undertake to do Justice to that Book, of which we speak, against all your Falsifications. I shall only by the way take notice of such things as relate to my present Design, namely, to shew what little Credit ought to be given to your Accounts of Books and Authors, especially if they meddle with any of the *Socinian* Errors. Your Account of the Book in hand consists of four Parts; in the first you endeavour to stir up your Readers to Envy and Hatred against the Author, instead of giving him those praises and thanks which he justly deserves for having Refuted the *Socinian* Errors. In the Second you pretend that the Book treats of a Subject which it does not; in the third you propose and misrepresent the Opinion of the Orthodox about the

Reduced to  
four Heads.



## Letter I.

the Holy Trinity and the Eternal Godhead of the Son Incarnate, in a very absurd and ridiculous manner; and in the fourth, you mistake and misrepresent some parts of the Book itself. The first part, besides that it discovers the Malice of your Temper, than which scarce any thing else could make you to write such stuff, is so filthy, unreasonable and ridiculous, that though 'tis fit for nothing but to propagate some very pernicious Errors, (which you think the *Socinians* may be allowed to do) yet is it grounded only upon a vain and ridiculous Comparison, whereby you would have it that those who teach sound Doctrine, and those who broach false Notions should be compared to two contending Armies, who ought to be allowed equal Advantages of Ground, and to share alike in the Favour and Affection of the By-standers; otherwise you say 'tis below a generous Soldier to fight with another who has not the same Favour and Advantages allowed him: Whereas on the other side, it appears from the whole Tenor of the Scriptures, that those that teach and propagate Lies and Errors should not be compared to Soldiers, who have a right to Challenge our Favour; but rather to Seducers whom we must avoid and shut our Ears against, or to sowers of Tares, whom we are therefore carefully to watch, lest the Enemy come and Sow them while we are asleep. In the second Part, although the Author expressly (a) declares, *That he Designs to treat only of the Divinity of JESUS CHRIST, and not of his Incarnation; (or of the Union of the Divinity with the Humanity) nor of the Holy Trinity, because these things deserved to be treated of distinctly and apart: Yet nevertheless you (b) bring him in by way of supposition, as presenting his Book to some certain Chinese Philosopher, and (c) explaining the state of the Question concerning the three Persons of the Deity, and the Hypostatical Union of the second Person with the Humanity of Jesus Christ: Where 'tis evident to a Demonstration, that the Books which you pretend to give an Account, (especially if they don't favour the Socinian Notions) you misrepresent and pervert the matter and subject of them at your own Pleasure; but without this, you had had no room, no opportunity to break your Jest upon the Sound and Orthodox Doctrines of the Catholick Church, before your Indian Philosopher. This the third Part of your Account contains, where you make an Indian Heathen (an excellent Judge of things*

*And answered  
and refuted.*

(a) Pag. 4.

(b) Bib. p. 37c.

(c) Bib. p. 371. p. 372.

## Letter I.

things Spiritual, to be sure, which, as St. Paul says, are foolishness to the natural Man, not having the Spirit of God,) a judge of Orthodox Doctrines, which by way of Mockery, you draw up in the following Questions. 1. *Whether there be in God three Distinctions, of which we have no Idea; and between which there are certain Relations, of which likewise we have no Idea?* 2. *Whether the second of these unknown Distinctions was united to the Humanity of Christ in a manner likewise unknown?* Where 'tis evident that, besides your mistaking the Question, you propose the Divine Mysteries in a manner so favourable to the Socinians, and in such Ridiculous Terms, as can hardly fail of raising Laughter not only in Heathens and Prophane Men, but even almost in every body else. But had you stated the case fairly and according to the Author's mind, it should have been thus: "Whether those who believe that God is Omnipotent, incomprehensible and truth itself; that themselves are nothing but miserable Worms, and of such shallow and weak Capacities that they do not so much as comprehend the Nature of the least Hair of their own Heads; and who moreover acknowledge a certain Book, namely the Bible, to have come from God; whether such Persons, I say, when that Book witnesseth that God himself came among us, That it was he that spake to us, that instructed us, and that lived among us in a certain Body, and with a certain Soul, &c. ought not to believe all these things although they do not comprehend the manner how they should be; or reject them because they cannot? And again, as to the Holy Trinity (if this had been a proper place to say any thing of it) "Whether the same Persons, who agree in the incomprehensibility of God, the weakness of their own Capacity and the Divinity of the Scriptures, ought not, when the Scriptures mention a certain Sacred Triad in the Deity, to believe it although they do not understand it; or whether they should deny it, and do violence to the Scriptures, because they cannot? So that 'tis certain that even your Chinese Philosophers would give it against all those who should deny such things after they had agreed upon such common Principles, especially if those that deny them should acknowledge that they are not guided by the Spirit of God, and even boast that they don't want his Grace, Illumination and Internal Assistance,

Assistance, when yet the same Book, which they believe in, declares, That *no Man can understand the things of God without the Spirit of God*, and that to the natural Man, who has not that Spirit, they appear not only false, but even foolish and absurd: Which is the very Reason why those that deny the inward Grace of God, say they will not acknowledge those Mysteries; namely, because to them they appear absurd and incoherent. But enough of this. In the fourth part of your Account (not to mention other Things which are foreign to the matter in hand) where you more particularly set down the Contents of the Sections of the Book, you alledge, and, that it may not be lost, you repeat it three or four times, that in order to allow and acknowledge the Author's Arguments and Conclusions, *it must be presupposed that his Interpretations of the Scriptures are true*: Wherein you deal by him just as you did by me before, in alledging that I promised to give Demonstrations, provided the Readers would believe them, or receive them with Faith: Or as if one that had a Mind to cavil against a Mathematician upon the account of some Mathematical Demonstrations, should say, that it must indeed be acknowledged that they are true, provided it be presupposed that they are fairly and regularly deduced from sound Principles. But here indeed, nothing else is required or presupposed but that the Readers come with a sincere Mind and with a sound Judgment. For that a Demonstration is rightly deduced from received Principles, is not a thing that is supposed; but 'tis what is proved in the Demonstration: As in like manner in the Arguments of the incomparable Author, that the sense of the Scripture is such as he represents it, is not by him supposed, but proved: Which as to the substance of the Work, which I have perused, I can Witness to; and I doubt not but as many as shall Read the same in sincerity and uprightness of Heart, will also be of the same Opinion with me.

XXXIX. (3.) In a Book, entituled, *Entretiens sur diverses matieres de Theologie*, (tho' the first part of it was not written, yet \* it was published and approved by you as agreeable to your Principles,) † *Vossius* is often cited as one who with you and the Socinians rejects the proofs that are commonly alledged in favour of Original Sin; or at least as one that seems to favour the Objections that are raised against that Doctrine: Yea, you

XXXIX. (3.) *Vossius* Misrepresented in a Book \* published by Mr. Le Clerc. † *Entret.* p. 181.



Letter I. you have there || published the following Objection  
 || Entret. p. which you say, *He mentions but does not Answer. Adam*  
 195. *could not transmit his Sin to his Posterity, but either as*  
*As to the Do- a Moral, or as a Physical and efficient Cause: For be-*  
 ctrine of Ori- *tween them there is no Medium. But neither of these ways*  
 ginal Sin. *could he do it, &c. And then afterwards you en-*  
 ‡ Ibid. p. 196. *deavour to excule him ‡ for betraying his Cause, in*  
*producing and not answering this Objection. Who*  
*would not now believe you, when you cite the very places*  
*of a Book, where such Things may be found? For*  
*my part, I believed it was so at first; and indeed it*  
*did not a little contribute to lessen my esteem for Vos-*  
*sius, and of that excellent Book of his, before I read*  
*it; yea I was, upon your Testimony, somewhat scar-*  
*red, from looking into his Book, as not deserving to*  
*be read. But happening one time by chance to light*  
*on the Book, and to dip in it here and there, this*  
*Place came into my Mind which I turned to, and be-*  
*hold to my great Admiration I found that Vossius was*  
*most unworthily traduced by you. For in the Place*  
*which you quote he is so far from betraying his Cause, by*  
*answering nothing. That on the contrary he confirms*  
*it very solidly. Moreover, in the same Place he an-*  
*swers that Objection two ways, and that in these ex-*

But at last  
 vindicated  
 from his own  
 Writings.

\* Voss. Hist. pref. Words: \* *Adam is the occasion of it, (The*  
 Pelag. lib. 2. *Transmission of Sin to his Posterity) as a moral Cause:*  
 p. 3. Theol. 1. *In as much as by a moral and voluntary Act he merited and*  
 p. 221. Edit. *brought upon himself and all his Posterity the Privation of*  
 II. *Original Righteousness. But tho' ADAM be not di-*  
*rectly the Physical, but only the moral Cause of Original*  
*Sin; yet indirectly he may also be called the Physical Cause*  
*thereof, as he is the real Cause of that Cause which occasions*  
*the Privation of Righteousness. See here, how expressly*  
*he declares the contrary of what you attributed to*  
*him two several ways! Yea, even in the Preface of*  
*the same Work, he very remarkably inculcates the*  
*same Thing: I have shewn, says he, that Vincentius*  
*Lirinensis was in the Right, when he writ, that none be-*  
*fore Cælestius, that monstrous Disciple of Pelagius, ever de-*  
*niied that all Mankind was involv'd in the guilt of Adam's*  
*Transgression. But this Place of Vossius may be more*  
*commodiously refer'd to the next Observation.*

XL. (4.) Mr. XL. (4.) in the same Book, and in many Places of  
 Le Clerc as- your other Writings, you frequently affirm that the  
 Jerts that the Primitive Church, and all the most Ancient of the Fa-  
 Ancient Fa-  
 thers were Ignorant of the Doctrine of Original Sin.

thers

thers knew nothing of this Doctrine of Original Sin; and as you are unjust to them, in denying that they knew any thing of it, so are you likewise to St. *Augustin*, in \* ascribing it so particularly to him, as if he had been the first that broach'd it. If any one doubt of this let him read *Vossius's* History of *Pelagianism*, which you sometimes quote; where he will † find Twenty Three Pages, fill'd with the Testimonies of others, all before St. *Augustin*, for Confirmation of this Doctrine: All which the Learned Author produces upon occasion and in proof of this Theses. St. *Augustin* proves this Doctrine out of the Writings of the first Fathers; whose Testimonies are so clear and evident (as are likewise many others which he has not mentioned) that 'tis really amazing that there should have been any of Old, or any that now a-days should look upon this Doctrine as St. *Augustin's* Invention, and even endeavour to make others believe so too. And then after bringing in St. *Augustin*, answering this reproach of the *Pelagian*, that he was the first that had invented and maintained Original Sin, in these Words; 'Tis not I that have invented Original Sin, which the Catholick Faith believed from the beginning; But 'tis you without doubt, who deny it, that is to be accounted a new Heretick; *Vossius* goes on, and in Testimony thereof, he quotes of the Greek Fathers, *Ignatius of Antioch*, *Iustin Martyr*, *Tatian*, *Irenaeus*, *Origen*, *Methodius*, the two *Macarius's*, *Athanasius*, *Cyril*, *Basil*, *Gregory Nazienzen*, *Isychius*, *Chrysostom*, and of St. *Augustin's* Contemporaries, and those that came after him, some others; and of the *Larins*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, *Arnobius*, *Reticus*, *Olympius*, *Hilarius*, *Ambrose*, *Optatus Millevitanus*, *Prudentius*, *Hilarius Diaconus*, *Hierom*; and then concludes all with this remarkable Question of *Vincentius Lyrinensis*; Who ever before the Profane *Pelagius* presumed to ascribe such Power to free Will, as to think that the Grace of God was not continually necessary to assist the same in every Good Work? Who before *Caelestius* his monstrous Disciple ever denied that all Mankind were involved in the guilt of Adam's Transgression? And yet tho' you see and read these Things, you still go on and endeavour to persuade the World; || That nothing is more remote from the Faith of the Church before St. *Augustin*, than to believe, as he did, that we are all in general and equally Corrupted through Adam's Sin; and that he was the first that brought that Doctrine into the Church out of the School of the *Manichees*!

Letter I.

\* Entret. p. 115, 116, 124, 125, 127, &c. Item *Liberij. de S. Am. Ep. vi. p. 164.* † *Lib. ii. part 1. Thes. 6. p. 158, &c.* And that St. *Austin* was the first Author of it. Both which *Caelstius* are refuted by *Vossius*.

Entret. p. 115, 116.

XLI. (5.) XLI. (5.) In like manner you \* affirm that the Primitive Church knew nothing of the necessity of an inward and operating Grace; and that St. *Augustin*, was the first Author of that too: Whence you † call the Divine Grace, by way of derision, St. *Augustin's* Grace. But how falsely you have accused both the Church and St. *Augustin* in this matter also, is evident from the many irrefragable and express Testimonies both of several Greek and Latin Fathers, quoted at large by *Vossius* in his || Book before-mention'd. and that St.

*Austin* was the first Author thereof. The contrary proved by *Vossius*. \* *Entret.* p. 345, 346, 358, 365. † *Ibid.* p. 325. || *Hist. Pelag.* Lib. iii. Part 1 and 2. chiefly from p. 278 to 304.

XLII. A more XLII. I believe it would be unnecessary to produce any more Instances to shew what little Credit is to be given to you when you give an account of the Sense and Writings of any Author that treats of a Subject which you don't like: These, I think, are sufficient, and more might possibly tire the Reader, or be looked upon as Superfluous, and of no use. Permit me however, I pray, to shew in the last Place, in how dishonest and in my Opinion, inhuman a Manner you treat the Great St. *Augustin*, against whom you are more bitter in your invectives than against any other; calling him every where throughout your Writings, a *Converted Manichean*, one that was but ill Cured of *Manicheism*, a wretched Interpreter of the Scriptures, one that blabs out any Thing that comes into his Mouth, a perpetual Dreamer; with such like opprobrious Epirhets, even to that degree of Insolence, that you go on and \* quote an Italian Lampoon made upon him; permit me, I say, to add a few Words in vindication of this Holy and Venerable Prelate of the Church; who, because he Taught, and Writ, and Strenuously asserted that Doctrine, which utterly subverts and destroys all *Socinianism* and *Pelagianism*; all Self-Love and Pride of Heart; is therefore fallen so deeply under your displeasure.

XLIII. Mr. XLIII. There are Three Things especially in St. *Au-*  
*Le Clerc* dis- *gustin*, which you dislike: 1. The Doctrine of *Oigi-*  
*fes from St.* *nal Sin*: 2. The Doctrine of the Necessity of Divine  
*Austin.* Grace working inwardly to Salvation: 3. The Doctrine  
*First, about*  
*Original Sin: Secondly, about Inward Grace. And, Thirdly, about Pre-*  
*destination.*

about



## Letter I.

about the Particularity of that Grace given to some, and denied to others; and of the irresistibility thereof; that is, of Absolute and Particular Predestination; all which 'tis needless to explain more particularly in this Place. Now, that the First and Second of these cannot but be very odious and disagreeable to *Pelagianism*, and Self-Love, is so evident that it wants no proof; but as many as from a due regard to those Commands, which *Christ* principally enjoins in the Gospel, thought it their Duty to hate and deny themselves, have not only always agreed in the Truth of them, but even received and looked upon them as the surest Foundations of their Faith and Hope. For, who would put his trust in God, if he did not first mistrust himself? And who can mistrust himself, unless he really see and acknowledge his own Weakness and Corruption? Finally, who can ever faithfully resign and yield up himself and all the Faculties of his Soul, the Desire, the Understanding, the Will, &c. into the Hands of God, unless he look upon him as the only Guide and true Physician of Souls, and as the internal and efficient Cause of his Salvation? As to the Third, that God bestows his Grace upon some only, and that in an irresistible Manner, 'tis what some of the other-wise Orthodox Fathers took up with, because that, not having a true Idea of Liberty, they were afraid least, if they should grant that it was in the Power of Man to obtain or accept of Grace or not, to be Saved or not, it should follow that Man is the Cause of his own Salvation; or that he could obtain Grace at his own Pleasure: And therefore in order to discountenance such Erroneous Tenents, as being contrary to the first and second Truths, and favouring Pride and Self-Love, they chose rather to Teach, that the Grace by which we are Saved depends upon God in such a Manner, that seeing it so happens that all are not Saved by it, that therefore God neither did nor would give it to all Men; but only to some, who should be irresistibly Saved thereby. And this indeed, they defended out of a Good Principle, namely, the Love of God (as aiming thereby to promote his Glory only) and the Hatred of our own Pride and Self-Love (that no Man might have whereof to Boast.) But the rest of the Orthodox did not come into this Opinion: But either passing by the Difficulties which perplexed others, or it may be, thinking that they might easily be accounted for, and besides being of Opinion that

St. Austin  
vindicated as  
to the First and  
Second Points,

And also in  
what relates to  
the Third.

Predestination  
was at first  
maintained  
from a good  
Principle.  
But the con-  
trary Opinion  
obtained with  
most of the Or-  
thodox Chri-  
stians.

the

## Letter I.

*Both before  
and since St.  
Austin's time.  
\* Hist. Pelag.  
Lib. vii.  
Part 1. and 2.  
XLIV. The  
Socinian and  
Pelagian No-  
tions about  
the Universa-  
lity of Grace,  
though they  
seem to agree  
in some things,  
yet are they  
wholly diffe-  
rent from the  
true Doctrine  
taught by the  
Catholick  
Church.*

the Love of God might be better promoted, and that it would be a greater motive for Men to use their endeavours to obtain the same, if it was Taught that the Grace of God is indeed offer'd to all Men, but that every one is at Liberty to accept of it or not; the rest of the Orthodox, I say, for these Reasons embraced this Opinion, which not only prevailed in St. *Augustin's* Time, and after him, but flourished long before his Days, and was almost universally received, as may be seen from the Testimonies of the Fathers quoted by \* *Vossius*, and as yet appears, even at this Day in the greatest part of the *Roman Church*.

XLIV. But those that plead the Cause of Pride and Self Love, have not only disputed and denied the first and second of the above-mention'd Truths, which St. *Augustin* held in common with all the rest of the Primitive Church; but as to the third, they would fain have it thought that tho' they differ from St. *Augustin*, yet that they agree therein with the other Orthodox Fathers: Which is only a crafty and false InfINUATION. For what have they to do with the Particularity or Universality, the Resistibility or Irresistibility of the Internal Grace of God, whereby we are inwardly healed, quickned, guided and saved; when they substitute and mean nothing but a pretended superficial Grace (whether Resistible or Irresistible, let them see) laid, like so much Varnish, over Proud and Corrupted Hearts? Therefore they neither maintain the Doctrine of Universal Grace in an Orthodox Sense, nor upon Orthodox Principles. For, it is neither out of a Principle of true Humility, nor from a Desire of promoting God's Glory alone, that they maintain and teach, that the saving Grace of God is inwardly offer'd to all Men, so that they may, if they please, not make and produce, but by their own free Consent admit and suffer it to act, to illuminate, to heal, and finally to perfect them: But 'tis only out of a Principle of Pride, which is not willing to be Rejected, but Loved; and from Self-love, which is not willing to be Damned, but Saved; I say, 'tis from such Principles only that they teach that God Loves all Men, and that he will save them by such External Means as they in the midst of all their Pride and Self-Love, without hating and denying themselves, without acknowledging their own inward Misery and Corruption, and without the inward help of God, can very well perform; so that they flatter themselves with  
the

the belief that Pride and Self-Love are very consistent with Salvation.

Letter I.

XLV. But now who does not see that this *Pelagian* Notion of the Universality of Divine Grace is much worse than that of St. *Augustin*, of Predestination and particular Grace: This Opinion may very well consist with the Foundations of Faith and Hope; and a Good Man may think so, as I have shewn more at large \* elsewhere: But that shakes and destroys them; and if it was true, that God could save the Proud, and those that are given up to the Love of themselves, it would make him a favourer of and accomplice with (saving the Blasphemy of the Expression!) Devils, which is worse than *Manicheism*, which you and the Modern *Pelagians* charge upon St. *Augustin*. For the *Manicheans*, altho' they held two opposite Principles of Good and Evil, yet they never thought that they could be reconciled one to the other; whereas according to this *Pelagian* Hypothesis, they may be reconciled and united together.

XLV. The *Pelagian* Notion worse than Predestination.

\* Div. Oecon. Vol. v. ch. 7. No. 15, 16. and Vol. vi.

XLVI. But because St. *Augustin*, who agreed intirely with the Catholick Church in Fundamentals about Original Corruption and inward Grace, did differ from the same in the third and less material point: And because the *Pelagians* on the other side, who deny the first two Fundamental Articles, agree with the former and with the greatest part of the Church about the Universality of Grace, and the Liberty of Man's Will, and that too but in name and appearance only, and not in reality, there being under the ambiguity of the Word, a wide difference between them as to the matter: Hence it comes that the *Pelagians*, under that nominal and fallacious appearance only, do most deceitfully join themselves with those first Catholicks, as if they entirely agreed together upon the matter; and then afterwards opposing themselves to St. *Augustin* in every thing, they presume to bring in the Primitive Church (to which they first most deceitfully and indistinctly joined themselves by an Equivocation) as agreeing with them in their Notions against him: So that because he taught and maintained the true Doctrine which utterly subverts and destroys all *Pelagian* Pride and Self-Love, they rail and exclaim against him, and by that means in and through his sides, who agreed in other Things with the Church, they take the greater Liberty to display their Spite and Malice against all true Primitive Christianity. And

XLVI. The Reason why the *Pelagians* pretend that their Opinion about the Universality of Grace is the same with that of the Generality of Christians.

And why they are so inveterate against St. *Austin*.



## Letter I.

\* Sentimens  
Epist. 16. p.  
357. &c. De-  
fens des Sent.  
Epist. 14. p.  
367.

XLVII. A  
Character of  
St. Austin and  
his Writings.

In what man-  
ner Mr. Le  
Clerc treats  
both.

unless, besides the universal and native aversion of Corrupt Nature to the Truth, as above-mentioned, you also acknowledge these more special Reasons for your Inveterate Hatred of *St. Augustin*, 'tis to be wished that God would open your Heart, and make you truly sensible thereof; for in your Books, especially those against \* *Father Simon*, all that I have alledged is very evident to be seen; which shews that what you have said does not flow from the Love of the Truth, but from the Indefatigable Malignity of Hatred and other Evil Affections.

XLVII. For had you examined the Writing of this Holy Father in the Spirit of Love and Charity, the many resplendent Vertues which adorned his Pious Soul, and which even his Enemies have never Questioned, especially those which are all in all, the Love of God and his Neighbour accompanied with a most profound Humility, had afforded you a larger Field for Praise and Commendation, than one or two involuntary and unknown Mistakes, can be supposed to do for your Censure and Reproach: for so far was he from excusing or defending any Errors, that he was often wont to lament and be sorry for them if he knew them, and to confess them with that Sincerity of Heart, and in such a manner both before God and Man, that as many as heard and knew him could not but see, that in his most Devout and Humble Soul there was no Guile. But you on the contrary, not in the least regarding these and such like Things, nor any of the many salutary Truths which this Holy Doctor Taught and Inculcated for promoting the Love of God and other Christian Vertues; I say instead of taking notice of these and the like, you rather act the part of the Spider, who from the sweetest Flowers sucks the worst of Poison. You invent and insist upon some common Topicks, to bring the Piety of the Ancients into suspicion, as if they had written one way and lived another; but they are such as by no means agree with *St. Augustin*, whose Life, as to the Good and Evil thereof, has been canvassed and published both by his Friends and Enemies, and even by himself, who was the greatest Enemy to himself: Then, whenever you think you have discovered a Fault in him, you are so far from treating him with that Moderation, which you allow to *Grotius* and *Hammond*, &c. on the like occasions, that, as if indeed you was not conscious to your self of any Infirmities, you do not in any of  
your

your Corrections so much as observe the Moderation of the Hypocrite in the Gospel, who civilly admonished his Brother of the Mote in his Eye; when there was a Beam in his own: But as if you had forgot the Commandment, which enjoins us to Honour our Parents, i. e. our Elders also, and the Grey Hairs, and those who in the Church of God presided over the rest for their Instruction in *Christ*, and are now at rest with God; or as if you had a mind to equal or outdo the Wickedness of *Ham*, who exposed his Father's Nakedness, and for which he and his Posterity were justly accursed, you not only expose the Nakedness (if any there be) of the Holy Father's to the Derision of the whole World; but you often make and invent what truly is not so, and challenge every one to come and see it; and then after all, when one does come there appears nothing that wants to be hid (if it could be done) but rather the contrary.

XLVIII. For Example, There is none that Reads what you have charged upon St. *Augustin* in your Book mentioned in the Margin (a) (from Page 366 to 371) who will not think that St. *Augustin* was of that Cruel and Inhuman Temper, that he believed and Taught, that it is lawful for the Orthodox to compel Hereticks and those that are led away into any Error, to believe a thing against the Light of their Conscience witnessing to the Opinions which they embrace; and that even by Force, nay, that they may be punished with Death, even while they are believed to be in a state of Damnation, that as it would seem, they may please themselves in the horrible Thoughts of having hurried a Soul away into Perdition. Unless your Readers form such an Idea of St. *Augustin* from your Context, \* which is very long and artfully contrived, I will willingly submit my self to what Censure any of them shall think I deserve. You say your self in exprefs Words, that it follows from his Doctrine, That he that is most powerful has a right to Persecute Others, and that as every one is persuaded of the Truth of his own OPINIONS, and believes that others are in an Error; so is he in proportion bound in Conscience to persecute them. You also † say his Doctrine is Abominable. And again, in the same Place, which is also repeated in your || *Bibliothèque*, you say, that the most subtle of all the Fathers, did very gravely publish the most Inhuman Doctrine that ever was heard of among Men; and you ascribe such Things to him (towards the end of your Epistle) that you seem

XLVIII. St. Austin represented as one of a Cruel, Sanguinary and Persecuting Temper. (a) Defense des Sentimens des Theol. de Holl.

\* Pag. 369, 370.

† Pag. 367.

|| Bibli. Tom. iii. p. 122.

## Letter I.

XLIX. St. Austin vindicated from those Aspersions.

\* See more relating to this, in Mr. Claude Part iii. chap. iv. of his *De la Reform. de la Reform.* The Case of the Donatists stated.

to be in a manner Angry with your self, because you have not treated him with less respect than you have done. So far therefore does your Malice against him go, that 'tis not your Fault, if the whole World does not hate and abhor St. *Augustin*, as one of a Cruel, Sanguinary, Malicious and Diabolical Temper.

XLIX. But that these neither were the Sentiments, nor that any thing like them is contained in, or fairly deduceable from the Writings of this Holy Father; but that they are mere Invectives, Calumnies and Impostures cast upon him, will evidently appear to any one, that upon reading those scraps which you have pick'd out of a Letter of his to *Vincentius*, shall observe upon reading the whole Letter, and some other Things relating to the same Subject, that you have wracked every Thing he said on certain particular subjects or occasions, to other subjects and matters wholly different from them, which (according to your usual way) you substitute in the room of those of which St. *Augustin* treated. For in his dispute with the *Donatists*, he does not treat of matters of \* Faith nor of the Articles which every one ought to believe in order to Salvation, nor consequently that any one should by any means, much less upon Pain of Death, be compelled to believe them.

But the Question there is about yielding an External Obedience to superiours in matters of Discipline, and about preserving the publick Peace, with regard to Matters of Fact and Things Personal, decided and enjoin'd by lawful Judges (such as the *Donatists* themselves had desired) yea, and by the Supreme Power it self. Now that the higher Powers could compel such as shewed themselves refractory to Obedience, and that upon pain of Suffering Capital Punishments if they continued Obstinate and Committed all sorts of Outrages and Cruelties, in defence of their Rebellion, no Body, unless he be too Indulgent, or even a professed Patron of Wickedness, will presume to deny. And this was the Case of the *Donatists*, of whom St. *Augustin* speaks. They were not a Sect that disputed about matters of Faith, or that differed in such Points from the Catholicks; but it was a Party or Multitude that Wickedly Rebelled against their Governors, to whom they refused to be subject as to External. After that a Bishop had been duely Elected and Placed over them, they refused to obey him as their Superior in Matters of External Discipline; they reject him; they



Letter I.



they Seditiously set up another; and then demand Judges to whose Decision they may submit themselves; they refuse to submit to their Determination; they a second and third time demand others, and as often reject their Decisions: They appeal to *Cæsar*; and though his Sentence related only to the publick Peace and External Obedience, and did not in the least enjoin them to change any Article of their Faith, yet they refuse to submit to his Authority too: Then seeing that all their ways of acting were condemned by all the Churches, they declare themselves open Enemies to all Societies, and to their Disobedience they afterwards add Tumults, Seditions, Persecutions; they are guilty of all sorts of Outrages; they even kill and murder their Bishops and Presbyters; they burn and lay waste all before them, they commit many other Cruelties and Barbarities; and if any of them repented or shewed an Inclination to return to their Obedience, why then both they and their Houses were destroyed and razed to the ground by their Companions; and so far were they from shewing any Inclination to return to Peace and Obedience, that they rather went on in their wicked Courses, and did what in them lay both to disturb themselves and the whole Church by their Ravages and Persecutions. At last the Catholick Bishops deliberate among themselves, whether or no they might call in the secular Power to their Assistance, in order to quell such Monsters, and reduce them to Order? St. *Augustin*, according to the wonted meekness of his Temper, thought that the Ecclesiastical Order ought not to have recourse to any other means against them, but Admonition and Patience: The other Bishops thought that the Laws and Authority of Christian Emperors might be called in to their Assistance: And this was done. The Imperial Laws therefore interpose, and are made use of in order to put a stop to this unnatural Rebellion and Disobedience, not such as touched the Life of the Offender; but only such as regarded the Estates, and sometimes extended to the banishment of some Persons; not such as compelled any one to change his Faith; but only commanded him to give over his Rebellion, and to return to Peace and Concord with those of the same Faith with himself. These Laws for the most part produce the desired Effect: St. *Augustin* from the Event approves of the thing, and changes his former Opinion, which was, that those Refractory

Vid. Epist.  
Aug. ad Bonifacium (quæ est 50 in Ed. Altorf. 1668.) ubi tota Historia diducte Narratur.

## Letter I.

St. Austin  
indicated  
with relation  
to the Dona-  
tists.

(a) See Eras-  
mus's Cha-  
racter of St.  
Austin, pre-  
fix'd to his  
Epistles.

(b) Epist.  
127. Edit.  
Altorf.

Persons ought only to be admonished by their Pastors, but not forced by calling in the Civil Powers to their Assistance, to return to Order and Obedience. Now where is the Crime of all this in St. *Augustin*? What Affinity or Relation is there between this and that monstrous Doctrine which you ascribe to him, unless it be some Words, as when he calls those Refractory and Schismatical Persons, *Hereticks*, according to the Sense of the word in his days; or as when he calls Obedience and Justice, *Truth* or possibly *Faith*; whence matters of Faith and matters of Discipline may possibly by unwary Persons be confounded one with the other, when yet the Subjects and the Causes, and also the effects are wholly different? And indeed among all the Fathers you could not have pitched upon one who less deserves your Accusation of Inhumanity and Cruelty, as to his Sentiments and Doctrines: On the contrary, the meekness of the Spirit of Christ joined with a most admirable Humility of Heart, were so peculiar to him, and they appear so evidently throughout all his Writings, that it must be allowed that in those respects he excells all the rest. (a) Yea, so averse was this Holy Man from inflicting Punishments, or spilling Blood, that though the *Donatists* had for Murders committed rendered themselves obnoxious to such Punishments, yet he powerfully interceded for them; so far was he from rejoicing in their Death or Damnation, as you very uncharitably and unjustly suspect. Thus in his Letter about that Affair to *Donatus* the Proconsul of *Africk*, he has these Words: (b) *We are very much afraid ——— least you should think the means of restraining and suppressing the Evil (which the Donatists had brought upon the Church) should be proportioned to the Atrociousness of the Crimes, rather than tempered with Christian Lenity; which we beseech you in the Name of JESUS CHRIST, that you would not do. For we neither seek revenge of our Enemies in this World, nor ought any thing that we suffer to make us forget what he commanded, for whose Truth and Name we suffer, namely to love our Enemies and pray for them. Wherefore to the end they may escape Eternal Punishments, we wish that the Authority of the Laws and the rigour of their Judges may be made use of as means to correct, but not to kill them: We would neither have a due Discipline neglected, nor the Punishments which they deserve, rigorously inflicted. Give therefore such a check to their Offences, that it may repent them that they have offended. We pray you*

you therefore that when you hear the Churches Cause, though you should find that she is most wickedly abused and ill treated, yet that you would forget that you have the Power of Death, and that you would not forget our Petition. Let it not seem a mean or contemptible thing, my honourably beloved Son, that we pray you not to kill those whom we Pray to God that he would correct; besides that we are also bound never to depart from that rule to overcome evil with good; and let your Prudence consider this also, that none but Ecclesiastical Persons have power to bring Ecclesiastical Affairs before you. Therefore if you think that Men ought for such Offences to be put to Death, you will deter us from being any wise instrumental in bringing such matters before you hereafter; and when once they find this, they will set themselves against us with more fury than ever, and we shall be reduced to the necessity, rather to choose to suffer them to kill us, than to bring them before your Tribunals to be put to Death. Disdain not, I beseech you, to accept of this my Admonition, Petition and Prayer. To this add that place to Marcellinus the Tribune (which (a) Grotius himself commends) about the same People: (b) I am under great concern lest perchance your Excellency should think that they ought to be punished according to the utmost severity of the Laws, so that what things they have done to others, such they should suffer themselves, and this I do by these Letters most earnestly beseech, and conjure you upon your Faith, which you have in Christ, through the Mercy and compassion of the Lord Christ himself, that you neither do, nor by any means suffer this to be done, &c. The whole Letter, which from the beginning to the End, is nothing but a most Pathetic and Ardent Intercession for them, deserves to be read; as also that to Apringius the Judge, which ends in these Words. Contend therefore in Goodness with many. They in a most inhuman manner tore away the Members from the living Body (the Donatists most barbarously pulled out the Eyes of some Catholicks) but do you practise a work of Mercy, so that those Members which were then employed in such wicked Deeds, may be made serviceable to some good and profitable Work. They did not spare the Servants of God, who forewarned them of their Correction; do you spare those that are taken; spare those that are brought before you; spare those that are Convicted. They with the Sword of wickedness shed Christian Blood; do you keep back even the Sword of Justice from their Blood, for Christ's sake. They having killed a Minister of the Church, did

(a) De Jure  
Belli, Lib.  
ii. ch. 28.  
§. 36.  
(b) Epist. 159.



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(a) *Erasm. in Apol. ad Alphonf. Manric. Archiepiscop. Sevil. in Tom. IX. operis suorum.*  
 (b) *Wierus de Prestig. Dam. Lib. 6. chap. 18. St. Austin vindicated with Regard to the Capital Laws against Pagan Sacrifices.*

by violent means shorten the Thread of Life ; but do you enlarge the time of Repentance to the Churches Enemies. Such a Judge in Ecclesiastical matters you must shew your self upon our Petition, Admonition and Intercession. Many other instances might be produced to the same purpose, if these were not sufficient to vindicate the meek Temper and glorious Character of this Holy Man from the imputation of Cruelty, which you invidiously charge upon him. To this Calumny indeed (a) *Erasmus* (who was never yet suspected of Cruelty) would be more obnoxious, who thought that the Laws made against the *Donatists* were more gentle than they should have been ; and (b) *Wierus*, who was of so merciful a Disposition that he thought that some Clemency was even due to Witches, was of the same Opinion. But say you, *St. Augustine* praised the Capital Laws against the Pagan Sacrifices. Here again, you state the matter wrong. Did *St. Augustine* praise any Laws commanding that the Pagans should be put to Death for their Opinions, even those relating to their Sacrifices, unless they would change their Minds, and Embrace and believe other things against the Light of their Conscience ? By no means ; but he says that every Body commended those Laws, which under pain of capital Punishments, prohibited the EXTERNAL Performance of the Pagan Sacrifices, because that in such External Actions there were many things practised contrary to the Laws and Dictates of Nature, against Good Manners, and destructive of Civil Society ; so that it was altogether unaccountable how, unless *Satan* had first blinded Mens Eyes, such Things ever came to be suffered. In their Sacrifices and Attonements to their Gods, they practiced and praised all manner of Filthiness, and all sorts of Vices in direct opposition to all Good Manners ; they used filthy and abominable Ceremonies, they offered human Blood, and even practiced Sorcery and Witchcraft : Now when such things ought even to have been prohibited by the Heathens themselves, under capital Penalties, why might not a Christian Power, when it came to hold the Reins, and after the Light of the Truth had more clearly discovered the Iniquity of such Things, prohibit those EXTERNAL ACTIONS, which corrupted Mens Manners, in order to deter them from such abominable Practices ? For tis certain that the said Laws were not Promulgated with an Intention to be put in execution, but only to terrify (as is usual) and reclaim Men from evil ;

whatever

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whatever you suggest out of your own head to the contrary; neither were they approved of by St. Augustine and his Contemporaries, but only in that Sense, as is evident from the Quotations just now mentioned. But if you are displeased at this, it's no Wonder; for the Holy Scriptures cannot please you, when they declare any thing that contradicts your Judgment; you then attribute to corrupt Affections the Maxims of those, who were divinely inspired, as among many others, that Place in the 137. Psalm, v. 9. where 'tis much to be wondered, that after you had found fault with that and some other Places of Scripture, you did not inveigh more bitterly against the Psalmist than against St. Augustine.

L. After that you have in good earnest attempted in one Place to paint St. Augustine as hateful and odious, you elsewhere endeavour to render him ridiculous by such Arts and Contrivances of your own as are directly contrary to Truth and Charity, viz. 1. By imputing many false and absurd Things to him, as I have already proved by several Instances. 2. By your perpetual Jest and Witticisms, of which presently. 3. By Disputing about Trifles of little or no Moment, and wholly passing by the Principal and most material Points. 4. By taxing his Writings and Opinions, and indeed the whole System of the Christian Religion as he proposes it, as favouring of Platonism, and sometimes (a) you call him a Mystick, or one that continually wanders in the Clouds, and then he is an Allegorist, whose Allegories, because the Love of Spiritual things does not affect any but pure and well disposed Minds, you say are cold and barren. Then you wonder that the Pelagians your Predecessors did not by these your Arts expose him, and make him appear ridiculous; but say you, (b) they were not great Criticks: you then, who are a great Critick, shall do it for them; for that Mimical Art is the greatest Talent which you generally employ, and wherewith you have hitherto endeavoured to make all others appear ridiculous to the World.

L. What Methods Mr. Le Clerc takes to make St. Augustine appear ridiculous.

(a) Sentim. Supra. p. 357.

(b) Ibid. p. 359.

LI. And indeed by such Methods you may easily gain your point upon St. Augustine, if you constantly pass by the main Scope and Substance of his Writings, namely the Honour of Christ, solid Piety, the right fear of the Lord, continual Penitence, the most pure Love of God, a most ardent Charity to all Mankind, a profound Humility of Soul, true Sanctity, and all other

LI. The Injustice of which proceeding is illustrated.

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 (a) Sentim.  
 P. 44.

other Divine and Christian Vertues ; and then catch at some smaller matters here and there, concerning which, he himself, by your own (a) confession, acknowledges, *That without any prejudice to our Faith as Christians, we may either be ignorant of the Truth, and suspend our Judgment ; or through human weakness and frailty be mistaken in our conjectures about them ;* which is far from that Arrogance, wherewith you very unjustly say, he insists upon such Things as *Oracles*. Nevertheless, because of these smaller Mistakes, from which however he endeavours to excite Piety and Reverence towards God and Man, and to draw all Men to God their chief end, and because they are not exactly agreeable to the Rules and Niceties of your vain and superficial Criticism, therefore you expose him to the Contempt and Ridicule of those, whom he endeavours to stir up to Divine Vertue, and to seek after God : In like manner, and with much the same pious Intention, as if in a numerous Family, to whom the Father had left a Book containing Orders and Instructions to reverence and obey him, and to live together in Brotherly Love and Concord, one of superiour Parts and Experience should expound the said Book to his Brethren in such a Sense and manner as might induce them to Love and Honour the Father, and make them easy and unanimous among themselves : This management of yours, I say, is as if upon such an occasion, some one of the Children more froward than the rest, despising the sincere and laudable Intention of his Brother, and mistaking the main scope and substance of his Discourse, should laugh at him and all the rest, and endeavour to ridicule whatever the other had said, because he had said some things of lesser moment, which could not bear a strict Critical Examination ; and should therefore, though such harmless mistakes did nothing but contribute to bend and dispose them to Love and observe their Father's Will, traduce him as a wicked and perverse Interpreter of the Will and Intention of their common Father : This is exactly your Case with regard to St. *Augustin*. This, surely, is a mighty Evil, to use all Innocent means, though possibly not so exact as Critics might wish, to promote Vertue and Honesty among Mankind ! who would not be ashamed to give such a mean and malicious Reason for Caviling ? allow there may be some things in the matter of his Discourse, not Circumstantially exact, or not agreeing together



together in every Tittle, what of all that? The sincerity of a Man's Heart, the sanctity of his Design, and the good Intention of his Will knows how to turn every thing that he says to a good use, and to make it subservient to the love of God and the good of his Neighbour: And I could shew that some of the most Holy Persons, even the inspired Writers, yea and even God himself, have admitted of such Improperities, and made use of them to reduce Men to Holy Order. Did any one of a Critical Disposition propose to raise his Fame by gathering together a great many vain trifling Observations (such as are most of thole in your *Bibliothèque*) wherewith to gratify the itching Curiosity of his Readers, and should he at the same time be found to have committed many Blunders and Mistakes (as you too have often done) or should he with any such design publish whole Books upon such idle Subjects, under the Name of *Observations* or *Sacred Questions*; then possibly in such a case, especially considering the folly of seeking Glory in such a way, another might find matter enough for Ridicule.

LII. But 'tis evident beyond Dispute that St. *Au-* LII. *How St.*  
*gustin's* Design is not from little Questions to catch at the Praises of Men, which from a Principle of true *Austin Inter-*  
 the Humility he utterly despised; nor to Excite or Tickle *preted the*  
 the vain curiosity of his Hearers or Readers with *Scriptures.*  
 Critical Accuracies; but that his whole aim and design was, by taking hold of every occasion to excite in Mens Minds holy Motions, to produce and cultivate the Glory, Worship and Love of God alone, and to humble and deny themselves before him. So that consequently in his Writings and in his Discourses to the People, 'tis plain that his Design was not to explain the Scriptures after a Critical or Grammatical way; nor yet simply after an External and Historical manner, in order to make them good Criticks or Historians; but rather in that way, which is the great Principle, the scope and the subject matter of the Scriptures, *The Love of God and our Neighbour*, which is able both to make and to preserve true Christians. This is the Method which this Holy Man took; he was possess'd of the Principle, the scope, the Matter; he was singularly endued with the Spirit of the Scriptures; that is, he had obtained the Spirit of Prayer, Divine Love, Mortification, Charity, Humility, which are the Keys and Dispositions to which  
 our

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*His Interpretations generally agree with the sense and scope of the Scripture, Which none of Mr. Le Clerc's do.*

(a) Oecon.  
Vol. iii. ch.

14.

*LIII. It does not become the Moderns to reflect upon and ridicule the Ancient Fathers of the Church.*

our Heavenly Father has faithfully promised that he will open the salutary Sense and hidden Meanings of the Scriptures. And yet for all this you are neither afraid nor ashamed to traduce this great and good Man as ridiculous and silly ; as one of the worst Interpreters of the Scripture, *and as one that was not provided with any proper means for Interpreting it* ; all which you say is evident from every part of his Writings. But for all your assurance, I affirm, and I'll venture what you please upon it, that though possibly some of his Interpretations may not be so accurate in every point, as to the Literal, Superficial and Critical part, yet that there is not one of a thousand of them but what agrees with, and contains the sense and scope of the Holy Scriptures, as above-mentioned ; and that of your own Expositions there is not so much as one perfectly agreeable to the Mind of God and to the salutary Sense of the Scriptures ; but that on the other side, they (although you may have said some things, which may agree with the External, Literal and Accidental Sense of the Scriptures) either conceal or enervate, or destroy and contradict the Mind and Intention of God. And he that will but a little consider what I have written about the subject matter of Interpretation and Criticism in my Books of *Erudition*, and also in the (a) *Oeconomy*, will see that I have very good Reason for what I say.

LIII. And if the Sincere and Judicious Part of Mankind would but consider and observe the Rules that I have laid down, and thereby learn to distinguish solid Truth from that which has nothing but the false and deceitful Appearance thereof ; then Criticism and all the Wit and Ridicule which it occasions, would fall of course : Then also all the Scandal and Reproach which Men of such restless Tempers endeavour to cast upon others, would return and fall upon their own Heads, especially when it should be observed (which many have done already) that nothing is more base or more unbecoming any of the Moderns, especially those that are but upstarts, and even suspected of worse Principles, than without any Shame or Conscience, publicly or before unsettled Youth, to censure and ridicule such Persons as, for their Age, Merits, Sanctity, Authority, and other rare Gifts and Graces, were so highly conspicuous ; such as were much honoured and esteemed by all the wise and holy Men of their own times ; such as all

after

after Ages have had a great Veneration for; and finally such as handled and explained the Holy Scriptures with no other design nor view, but only to promote the Glory of God and the Salvation of Men. Such venerable Persons are neither a fit Subject nor proper Matter for Ridicule; and indeed whoever gives himself the Liberty to practice his Talents that way upon them, not only does a thing that ought to be abhorred by all good Men, but also, especially if it be habitual to him, very plainly discovers, the Marks and Tokens of a mean and degenerate Soul in himself. For habitual Mockery proceeds from Impiety, Dishonesty, Pride, Envy, Hatred, Revenge, Cruelty, Malice and Hypocrisy, which are such Dispositions of Soul, as above all others are most abominable in the sight of God. The *Impiety* and Dishonesty of such Scoffers evidently appears, in that for trifles of no moment they do not scruple to ridicule such things as were spoken in the greatest sincerity of Heart, and which really contribute to excite in us good Desires and Inclinations to Praise and Love and serve God; and for that they expose the Authors of such things, not only to the Laughter, but to the Hatred, and even to the Curses of all the World. *Pride* is the Mother of Ridicule, when the Mind puffed up with Self-love, and admiring every thing of its own, slights and contemns every thing that another possesses; and being envious and fearful, or seeing that other things are preferred to its own, it endeavours, by ridiculing them, to hinder that it should be so; little considering, that the sober part of Mankind will look upon it as nothing but the effect of the most Ridiculous Pride and Envy, to admire and esteem himself upon the Account of some frivolous Grammatical, Critical and Historical Niceties, of no solid use; and at the same time to despise and vilify others, who have delivered many Excellent, Divine and Solid Truths, and who deserve infinitely better of Mankind than himself: So that hereby the scoffer shews that he is not animated with Love to his Neighbours as he ought, but that he *hates* them; and in order to take his *Revenge* of them, he takes care not only to wound them to the Heart with his bitter Taunts and biting Jest, and to make them sensible that he despises them, and looks upon them as Fools; but that he may do it with more Cruelty, and create as much uneasiness and pain as possible, in those whom he Traduces, he takes



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all ways to let them see that they are also out of favour and esteem with others, and that the World not only does not Pity (which is what it seldom denies to any sufferer) but even rejoices with him and insults over them. Who would not choose to be rather openly attack'd by a declar'd Enemy, than covertly and under the insidious pretence of Peace and Tranquility to be thus prick'd and stabb'd to Death? In the first case one sees that he is not altogether despised as nothing; and as he has the Liberty, so every Body is willing to hear what he can say in his own Defence; but in the latter, he only sees that he is despised, and he appears almost ridiculous to others whenever he complains of the Injury done him, or thinks of defending himself; that this kind of Mischief is of all others the hardest to bear, they know full well who use it. Whence the premeditated *Malice* of such as use these Methods is also very evident, especially when the scoffer first invents some Absurdities, and then so dextrously manages the matter as to make his Readers think, that not himself but the Person whom he pretends to give an Account of, is the Author of them; this wicked Artifice of his own he sees and admires, and secretly rejoices in it, while at the same time he preserves and keeps on the *Hypocritical* Mask and Title of a Just, Moderate and Honest Man, before the World; and all this, because that in venting his Spite and Malice, he neither shews any Perturbation of Mind, nor uses any uncouth Expressions, but with great sedateness of thought and dexterity of Language, he so artfully blends and mixes the deadly Poison, sometimes with the shew of Praise, then with an Apology for his Adversary, and other whiles with some little Narrative or other, that 'tis generally received and swallowed without the least pain or reluctance, and then indeed, as the Pharisees did of old, he is pleased in that he sees that others look upon him as an Honest, modest Man, and as one that knows how to govern his Passions; and he despises and mocks at those who either out of Zeal or Passion are stir'd up to utter passionate, or possibly reproachful Words, when yet he himself had given the Provocation; but in the sight of God those who are guilty of Impiety, Disingenuity, Pride, Hatred, Revenge, Cruelty, Malice and Hypocrisy are more abominable than open and gross sinners; and these are preferred to them in God's Account. Now,

Sir,

Sir, if these Things have not taken too deep a Root in you, or if you are not yet sufficiently aware of the danger of them, I pray God that he would shew you them in their true and dreadful Colours, that so you may either be reclaimed, or hindred from falling into that precipice to which almost all your Writings shew a very strong Tendency, especially those wherein you have written against others, or where you speak of those who differ from your Opinions, and more particularly if they happen to contradict any of your *Socinian* or *Pelagian* Tenets. For all that you write upon such occasions are so filled with tacit and sly Reflexions against them, that though a less attentive Reader may not mind them, yet to those that see further into your Design, you thereby raise and gratify that Spirit of Envy and Detraction against them, which by Reason of the universal Corruption of human Nature, lies lurking secretly in all Men; so that they can scarce forbear from shewing their Contempt, not only of those whom you expose, but even of all other Readers, who by Reason of their simplicity (or less censorious Dispositions) were not aware of such malignant and invidious Insinuations. Indeed to use some innocent Jest or witty Sayings in matters of little or no moment, and even upon some other occasions, such as to reclaim vicious Men, by making them ashamed of their evil Practices, provided it be done with out breach of mutual Charity, I see no harm therein; and we see that the Interests of Vertue are often supported and promoted by such means; and indeed supposing that a good Man should happen to be sometimes mistaken therein, he might possibly be excused. But to Exercise such a Talent in and about matters of Religion, and upon sincere and devout Men, to render them ridiculous to others, and to make it ones constant custom to do so, this is not only unbecoming the Character of a Christian but even of an honest Man. Those (a) honest and worthy Persons who have sifted your Writings, examined your pleasant Criticisms, and observed your strange Temerity in matters of Faith and Religion; (b) those who have Condemned your Criticks as rash, impious and prophane; those who have shewn that your Writings are for the most part filled with Opinions favouring (c) *Arianism*, *Pelagianism* and *Libertinism*; such Persons, I say, have sometimes and by the by taken occasion from your own Absurdities to banter and laugh at you, but generally they have

(a) M. Abbad. Verite de la Relig. Chr. I. P. ch. 9. Du Pin, Bibl. Eccl. P. I. diff. præl. p. 38.  
 (b) Vid. Witffii Misc. Sacra. cap. 14. 18. 22.  
 (c) Ibid. p. 345.

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done it, because you was the Aggressor and provoked them to it. But of them all only Father *Simon*, whom at every turn you used to play upon, has taken you at your own Weapons, and paid you so fully home, that from hence forward you ought to leave him Master of the Field. Whether many Others will follow his Example I know not. As to Backbiting and Ridicule the case is much the same as in Murder or any other Injury; it is not lawful to attack any one; but to repay the Aggressor in his own Coin, seems to be excusable, provided care be taken to guard sufficiently against Revenge, and the other above-mentioned Vices; which in this corrupted State that we are now in, is, I fear, very difficult, if not impossible.

LIV. That there are more Things in Mr. Le Clerc's own Writings which deserve to be exposed and laughed at, than he has observed in others. And in particular he is often guilty of Contradictions.

Thus he endeavours to reconcile Pelagianism and Socinianism with Christianity. To limit Metaphysics; To calumniate the Fathers;

LIV. Therefore should any of those whom you have thus abused, or who cannot bear to see Holy Men exposed publickly to ridicule, draw their Pens also against you, either to ward off and return your blows, or to shew you your own Absurdities, I believe none of them would choose to do it after so base a manner as I have just now mentioned, tho' possibly they might find matter enough in your Writings to carp and laugh at: Not only because they abound with Things Copied from others, with many inconsiderable Trifles, and with Things that are vain and indifferent in themselves, in all which cases jests might be more Innocently used; but also because that to all your other Blunders you frequently add that ridiculous one, which they call a *Contradiction*. For my Part, not to be tedious, I shall only take notice here of three or four Things, which upon a Transient view I could not but observe in your Writings, and which methinks are nothing but downright Contradictions: Such as, First, to incorporate and reconcile *Pelagianism* and *Socinianism*, to and with Christianity (possibly that they at last may succeed in the place thereof.) Secondly, to limit and restrain *Metaphysics*; (under which Head when you have included the chief Mysteries of Religion, and such as are most opposite to the *Socinian* Principles, you may then with the less Disgrace expunge them wholly out of your Creed.) Thirdly, to calumniate and defame St. *Augustin* and all the Fathers (as for instance, to say, that they maintained *Tritheism*.) And to expose them to the Mockery and Contempt of the World, under pretence that they were not so accurate as they ought to have been in some



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some smaller matters (but indeed to lessen and undermine their Credit and Authority, which otherwise would go a great way to put a stop to the growth of *Pelagianism* and *Socinianism*, to both which, in all their Writings, they shew the greatest Horror and Aversion.) Fourthly, to commend Critical and other Parts of Human Learning, as highly deserving our regard, and as necessary means to the right understanding Divine Matters (which being substituted in the room of the Divine Illumination and other Operations of the Spirit of God, this alone Foundation of *Socinianism* may remain safe and unshaken.) Now by the first of these, you make it indifferent to Salvation, whether a Christian have any Object, namely, the Son of God and the Holy Spirit, for the chief Foundation of his Faith, Hope and Salvation, and for the Object of his highest Love and Adoration; or whether he look upon the same Object as a Creature, which can neither be the Foundation of his Faith, Hope and Salvation, nor the Object of his highest Love and Adoration. Moreover you make it indifferent to a Christian, or to a true and living Member of *Christ's* Body, whether he partake of the Spirit of the Head and Body, and of the Life and internal Operations thereof, or whether he want that Spirit and its internal Operations in himself, and stand in no need of them, as the Modern *Pelagians* affirm? That is, that 'tis indifferent to a living Member to be animated by the Head and Spirit of the Body, or to be without them? That 'tis indifferent to a living Person, whether he has in him the Principles of Life or not, and consequently whether he be dead or alive. All which are manifest Contradictions. As to the second, whereby you mean not to destroy but to reform *Metaphysicks*, among many other obscure and confused Notions, where you wander here and there without any Light or Coherence, and mix and confound Things of a Metaphysical Nature with matters of Faith and Sense, you say, \* *That three parts in four of Metaphysicks might be taken away,* ——— If *Metaphysical* Disquisitions were limited to such Things as are necessary to Salvation. Again, † *That God has let us into the Knowledge of Things of a Metaphysical Nature, so far as is necessary to our Salvation, or to the end for which he Created us.* But all agree, and you will hardly deny it, that the Metaphysical Knowledge of Things, as such, is not necessary to Salvation: For then what would become of the Generality of the World who know nothing of such Matters? a little after

And to commend Criticism.

How Mr. Le Clerc contradicts himself as to the first Instance.

As to the Second.

\* Entret. p. 233.

† Ibid. p. 277.

Letter I. you say, *|| Whatever is necessary, is so plain, that all Men may know it : And that therefore Metaphysicians whenever they have attempted to teach us any thing about this Matter, they have Taught us either nothing that is new, or at least nothing that is essential.* Where, by the first Words, you seem to acknowledge, and by these last, to destroy all Metaphysical Knowledge. Which is again a Contradiction. In the third particular, you also Contradict your self. You are not Ignorant that the Fathers very often and in the most express Words cleared themselves from the Imputation of *Tritheism*. You acknowledge more than once in your Writings, " that \*  
 \* *In Dis. de* " Consequences or Corollaries, whether well or ill  
*Arg. to ab In-* " deduced from the Principles of an Adversary, nei-  
*vidia ducto.* " ther can nor ought, but out of Malice and Envy,  
*n. 12.* " be imputed to him, that openly and expressly disa-  
*Bibl. Choisie.* " vows them. " And yet almost every where in your  
*Tom. iv. p.* Writings, you go on and charge the Ancient Fathers  
*375, 376, &c.* with *Tritheism*. When, I pray, may one, one that is  
 conscious to himself of this Fraudulent and Invidious  
 way of acting, be said to contradict himself, if not  
 in this Case? Finally, you acknowledge in one Place †  
 † *Sentim. P.* that the Holy Penmen had so little regard to *Style*, that  
*15, 16.* almost every where there occurs *Obscurities*, which cannot be cleared up by all the Rules of Grammar. —  
 That Grammar and Criticks are of no use but where we know the scope and design of the Author. You affirm, that the meaner sort, and such as make the best use they can of their Understanding, may learn from the Scriptures all that is necessary to Salvation; namely, to believe in God and keep his Commandments. Now without doubt you will allow that St. *Augustin* was at least one of the weaker sort, who by reading the Scriptures might learn this essential and necessary Point. And you cannot but know that his Design in Instructing the People over whom he was placed, as well as in all his Writings, was to Interpret the Scriptures so as to teach and ground them in the essentials, in Faith towards God, and in Obedience to his Commands; but not to make them Learned Criticks; and yet you very frequently exclaim against him, and other Holy Fathers, as if for Men of their Characters, they were the worst and most ridiculous Interpreters of Scripture, because forsooth they neglected to Mind the niceties of Grammar and Criticism; so that you reproach them for no other cause, but only because they either knew not or willfully slighted those Things, which even by your own Confession, is very usual with the  
 Sacred



Letter I.

Sacred Writers themselves : Which is the more unjust in you, because they looked upon the Illumination of the Holy Spirit as absolutely necessary in order to understand aright the scope and meaning of any of the Sacred Writers, which they earnestly Prayed for, and sometimes acknowledged that they had obtained it. So that upon the whole, 'tis evident that in all these Things you plainly contradict your self; much after the same manner as when, *Fourthly*, you commend I don't know how many sorts of Human and Profane Learning, Arts, Languages, various Readings, Critical and Historical Observations, &c. To employ and wholly take up our Mind about, altho' it be a Thing that is manifestly contrary both to that part of our Nature, which can only be satisfied with Things Eternal, and not with such barren and empty Amusements; and to Experience, which shews that those who think they have more Reason to boast of such vain and empty Accomplishments, are at a much greater distance than others from the alone Fountain of all solid Truth and true Holiness, the Spirit of God, and from possessing, or hoping and desiring to possess and enjoy him; and even to *Liberius* (that is to your self) where in your Theological Epistles you condemn every thing, as coming of Imperfection, which *does not make us more Holy and more Happy*; under which Head all your Critical Learning, with all the Idle Fooleries relating thereto, must undoubtedly be placed, unless you would exalt it above our Saviour, and by a new sort of Apotheosis, call Criticism not an Happy and Holy, but a Beatifick and Sanctifying Art or Science. The express Words of *Liberius* are these; \* *'Tis an Imperfection to know such Things as are unprofitable; and to spend our Time in Learning those Sciences which neither make us Holier nor Happier.* O how many, according to this Rule, make it their Business to study in order to become daily more *Imperfect*, and do all they can to persuade others to do the like! I will not enlarge in this Place to shew how unworthily they treat the Scriptures who think that they must be expounded by such Arts and Means as these: I'll venture however to say, that should any Critick, qualified according to your Instructions, and observing your Rules only, undertake to give us an Interpretation or Exposition of the Holy Scriptures, instead of giving us the Marrow and Substance, he would only present us

And in the  
*Fourth.*

\* *Liberius p.*  
125.



## Letter I.

*The Consequences of Interpreting the Scriptures by Criticism, &c.*

with the outward literal and superficial Appearance, with the Dead Body of the Letter, not only without, but against and in contradiction to the Spirit; and which would destroy the Life and Power thereof in us, and bring upon us a Deadly Contagion and Indolence. An Indolence, I say, should Criticism let Mens Minds loose from the fear and apprehension of all the dreadful Judgments, Plagues, Slaughters and Scourges, which God out of his infinite Love has in Holy Writ foretold and threatned to pour out upon Mankind in these last Days, in order to awaken them out of their deadly Security, which seem now to be the only means left to raise and excite in Men Hopes and Desires after Things Eternal; or should it most Wickedly insinuate or inculcate that all the admirable Promises in Scripture of Divine Gifts are long since past and fulfilled, and consequently that none in these latter times either has or ought to expect the like; I say, such a Critical Interpretation, should it take away our Fears and destroy our Hopes, those great and powerful Motives to Repentance and a Good Life, it could not chuse but affect Mankind with a most dangerous Indolence: And the Contagion would be every whit as bad, seeing in interpreting the Scriptures every thing in them that should have been considered as Types of better Things, and which besides the literal meaning should have been applied to the spiritual State of Souls and to the Internal Operations of God in them, would be Expounded after such a brutal, carnal, literal and superficial manner, that the true divine scope and meaning of those Sacred Writings would be wholly left out and rejected: So that nothing can be a more pernicious Contradiction to the Scriptures, or more opposite to the Duty and Office of a Good Interpreter, than to use and rely upon such Explications and Commentaries: And we ought to beseech God to root out and bring to nought the Errors and ill effects which such Interpretations may have already created and fomented in Men's Minds; and that by the powerful and preventing Influences of his Grace, he would keep the rest of Mankind from falling into them for the future.

LV. *The Right way of shewing Men their Errors and Mistakes.*

LV. These, and such like Errors, and indeed every other mistake which any one does commit, are better shewn and corrected in a meek and friendly way, than in Bitterness and Anger. But the best way of all for any one to be convinced of his Errors, or of any other Evil, is, either upon the Advice of others, or in

Obedience

Obedience to the secret Direction of his own Conscience, to recollect himself inwardly, and there to implore the only instructor of Souls, the Author of all true Knowledge and Light, the blessed and adorable Spirit of God, whose Light, Gifts, Operations, and other Effusions are promised in a thousand Places of Scripture, especially in those Times, in which Darknesh, Iniquity, Error and Impiety abound, as in the last Times, which we are either in, or so very near, that 'tis evident nothing can be more, than he would vouchsafe to enlighten his Understanding, and lead him into the Paths of Truth. We must take care only that we be not of the number of those, or suffer ourselves to be seduced by them, of whom the Apostle forewarn'd us, when he said, (a) *That there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own Lusts, and saying, where is the Promise of his Coming? They walk after their own Lusts, who will not admit, believe, nor hope for any thing relating to Divine Myteries, but what their shallow Understanding can comprehend, and what is agreeable to their corrupt Tait, and natural Comprehension: The Scoffers at the Promises of the Lord, are such as by Reason of their Incredulity deny the Presence and Grace, and the Internal and Quickening Operations of God's Holy Spirit; such as laugh at the Gifts of Illumination and all other Divine helps and assistances, and say that we have no ground to hope for such Things, altho' the Omnipotent himself, who cannot Lie, has expressly promised them; the Scoffers at the coming of the Lord, are those who do not expect that he will come to instruct, Renew and Govern all things by the Effusion of his Spirit, which he will pour out upon all flesh; which shall form or create new Heavens and a new Earth, wherein Righteousness may dwell, when he shall destroy by Fire the Scoffers themselves, and purge the World from all its Corruption. And then* (b) *Remember me, O Lord, according to the favour that thou bearest unto thy People: O visit me with thy Salvation, that I may see the felicity of thy chosen; and rejoice in the gladness of thy People, and give thanks with thine Inheritance. May the Lord quicken our Souls in the hope of his Grace and Salvation, and enable us by the help of his Divine Light seriously to examine our own Hearts, (c) Least there should be in any of us an evil for. Heart of Unbelief, to depart from the living God; and* (c) *Heb. 3. lest we should be hardened through the deceitfulness of*

(a) 2 Peter  
ch. 3. v. 3, 4.

whom we are  
to beware of.

(b) Psal. 108.  
4, 5.

(c) Heb. 3.

## Letter I.

*The end proposed in this Letter.*

(a) 1 Pet. 2.

*sin, and be of the number of those who because of their unbelief could not enter into his Rest. That God would grant this Mercy to us all; and to you, Sir, in particular, is what from the very bottom of my Soul I most sincerely wish and pray for; as also that he would enable you to see, that all that I have said, is with no other Design but only for your real good; and that it may have the intended effect with you and others, which is, to remove those Obstacles which hinder the Communication and Progress of Divine Truth, Grace and Glory among Men; so that laying aside these things, (a) and all Malice, and all Guile and Hypocrisies, and Envy and all evil speakings, and all our trifling Studies and worldly Views and Interests, we may as new born Babes desire that intellectual Milk of Divine Wisdom, which is sincere and uncorrupted with human Mixtures, That we may grow thereby, tasting how bountiful and gracious the Lord is, To whom coming as unto a living Stone and Foundation of all true Wisdom and Erudition, though disallowed indeed of Men, yet chosen of God and Precious, we also as living Stones polished and taught by him, may be built up a spiritual House, wherein the holy and adorable Spirit of the Father and Son may dwell for ever. This, when it shall come to be your case as well as mine with many others, let us bless and praise the Omnipotent Instructor and Renewer of Souls, in whose Love we shall from thence forth rejoice for ever: So that afterwards I hope you will cease from Treating or Representing any thing relating to Religion, otherwise than shall be consistent with Truth, Justice and Charity. But if instead of complying with this Advice (than which I hope for better things of you) you should rather choose to stick to your former Method; I'll endeavour nevertheless to observe my own Rules, whereof one is not to undertake any more to convince those who deceive and impose upon themselves and others; but rather not to mind them, and to leave them wholly to themselves. They may then for me continue to speak and write as much as they please, in the Element of Division and Deceit; and should it happen that any thing should come out hereafter against me, either in the continuation of the *Bibliothèque*, or in any other Book, instead of any other Answer, I shall only desire the Reader to peruse the following Passage, and according to the Tenor thereof to remember, that he ought not readily to believe every thing that another says,*

*If Mr. Le Clerc will not take the Advice here offered.*

*But continues to write against Mr. Poiret.*

*Instead of a more particular Answer.*



says, unless he be first very well assured of his Honesty and Integrity.

Letter I.

*Reflections upon Father Simon's Critical History, Pag. 71.*

Indeed 'tis what gives us a great deal of trouble, that we can so little rely on the credit of Translators and of Quotations; and that there is so little Faith in the Re-  
publique of Letters. that we must treat Authors, as others do those who have been formerly convicted of Perjury, at least if we would not run the hazard of being imposed upon every moment. We must examine them nicely, and continually compare Translations and EXTRACTS with their Originals, if we would not be lead into Error upon the credit of those Gentlemen. You have without doubt heard of a certain famous Wrangler, called Hear-say, who kept a School to bred up Evidences in, and out of which are gone forth so great a number of false Witnesses. But, Sir, those People know nothing in comparison of an infinite number of Authors, who upon every occasion say, such a one, or such a one said things which he never thought of, and at the same time make solemn Protestations that they speak nothing but the Naked Truth.

The Reader is desired to consider this Quotation.

The

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The AUTHOR's  
**ANSWER**  
TO  
*Parrhasius's* **CENSURE.**  
WITH  
*CONSIDERATIONS* and  
*REMARKS* upon it.

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THE AUTHOR

# ANSWER

TO

Parish's CENSURE

WITH

CONSIDERATIONS  
AND  
REMARKS upon it

---



## Parrhasius's Censure.

**I** Know not in what view or with what Intention Mr. *Le Clerc*, read the foregoing Letter; but after several Years silence, there has at last appeared one that calls himself *Theodorus Parrhasius*, who in his *Parrhasiana*, written in *French*, has inserted the following Paragraph in favour of Mr. *Le Clerc*. The several Particulars of which I have here distinguish'd in a Numerical order, the Numbers whereof refer to the particular Remarks which I intend to subjoyn, after having first set down the Censure itself, and then premised some General Considerations upon it. The Tenor of the Censure is this.

*Theodorus Parrhasius, in his Parrhasiana*  
Page 383.

“ Among those that have (1.) unjustly complain-  
“ ed of the *Bibliothèque (Universelle)*, Written by Mr.  
“ *Le Clerc*,) we may reckon Mr. *Poiret*, a (2.) follow-  
“ er of *Antonia Bourignon*, who being provoked by one  
“ little (3.) Jest upon his *Divine Oeconomy*, set him-  
“ self (4.) beyond measure against Mr. *Le Clerc*, not  
“ only in a shorter Paper, which he caused to be in-  
“ serted in the *Repub. de Lettres*, for the Year 1687.  
“ But also some Years after in a larger Epistle, full of Gall  
“ and Malice, which he published at the end of his Book  
“ of *Solid Erudition*, without acquainting his Book-  
“ seller, who was not at all pleased therewith, Mr.  
“ *Le*

(1.)

(2.)

(3.)

(4.)

- (5.) " *Le Clerc* thought, there was no occasion to (5.) answer that Letter, seeing Mr. *Poivet's* (6.) Dreams (6.) (or Fancies) are so well known, that for a great while he has not been able to do any harm; altho' in that Letter he has omitted nothing in order to (7.) defame Mr. *Le Clerc*. But if he was to be (7.) blamed at all, it was because he reflected too slightly upon a Work (or Book) which (8.) deserved the (8.) severest Centure, as (9.) exposing all Religion to (9.) Mockery and Contempt from the beginning to the end, I as much as he turns it into mere Fanaticism. Mr. (10.) *Poivet* thinks that all the (10.) Fooleries of the (11.) Mysticks, and all the Chimera's which he thinks (11.) fit to add to them, ought to be received as (11.) Oracles, when he ought rather to be ashamed for (12.) (12.) making it his Business so long to seduce honest, well-meaning People by the (13.) ridiculous (13.) Notions which he has published relating to Spiritual Matters. The Fanatical (14.) Expressions of (14.) the Mysticks, can only deceive either those who are (15.) (15.) bent upon deceiving themselves, or who instead of Religion (16.) take up with empty Imaginations for Good Manners, founded upon the (17.) (17.) Hope of another Life proposed in the Gospel. As to those who know of what Importance 'tis to (18.) (18.) Love their Neighbour, they will take sufficient care not to be imposed upon by Mr. *Poivet's* (19.) (19.) Extatic Devotion; which is consistent with the blackest Malice. A remarkable Instance of his (20.) (20.) disingenuity appears in that Apology which he makes with so much care for St. *Augustin*, about (21.) (21.) Opinions which even he infinitely abhors himself, viz. Absolute Predestination, and Irresistible Grace, only to render Mr. *Le Clerc* (21.) (21.) odious if he could. The like may be said of the Explication which he gives of the Epistle written (22.) (22.) by that Father to *Vincentius*, wherein he would have it that (22.) St. *Augustin* did not hold that Persecution was Lawful; as if no Body but he (23.) (23.) had St. *Augustin's* Works to read the Letter itself. If Mr. *Poivet* will not apply himself to study Criticism, (24.) (24.) which he pretends he despises, he ought not to presume to speak of those Things (23.) (23.) which he does not understand. This Centure, 'tis true, (25.) (25.) will yet seem more severe upon him; but he must own that he has brought it justly upon himself; nor would I have him imagine that there
- " is



" is any (26.) design (in Mr. *Le Clerc*,) to enter the (26.)  
 " Lists with him. He only seeks disputes, (27.) that, (27.)  
 " if he could, he might be talked of, and by that  
 " means promote the Sale of his Books, which (28.) no (28.)  
 " Body reads. So that as to that matter Mr. *Le*  
 " *Clerc* will give him no opportunity to do himself  
 " any Service that way. He Consents, that if any  
 " one has so much time upon his Hands, and thinks  
 " fit to (30.) throw it away in reading that Letter, (30.)  
 " that he form a Judgment of the same, (29.) by (29.)  
 " comparing it with those Things which Mr. *Poiret*  
 " opposes, without any other Answer.

REMARKS

# REMARKS

Upon the foregoing

## CENSURE:

AND

*First, Some more general Considerations concerning the State and Importance of the Controversy.*

I. *The meaning and scope of the Parrhasian Censure.*



Must desire the Reader to consider whether he can gather any Light or Instruction from so Indigested and Injurious a Rapsody of Words, or even whether they can collect so much as the Historical meaning of the Controversy from them; so

General and Confused are *Parrhasius's* Clamours, that they neither shew the Importance of the matter, nor the State of the Question, nor so much as touch upon the Merits of the Cause; but are only Indications of an Angry Spirit, and full of that disdain and assurance, wherewith false Learning usually puffs up Mens Minds. Should the Reader be able to find out any thing relating to the Subject matter in Question, from his Words, it must be this, that neither Mr. *Le Clerc*, nor *Parrhasius* (who, if we may believe common Report, are both one) approves of Things *Mystical* and *Spiritual*, nor of the Authors who have treated of them, viz. The *Mystical* Writers, *St. Austin*, and their Admirers, nor of *Poiret* himself: Then, That Mr. *Le Clerc* has good Reasons why he disapproves of them, and that he could easily confute both them and their Books; But, thirdly, that he will keep them to himself, and not publish them, least thereby he should make his Adversaries, who are otherwise but

but obscure Persons, more known and illustrious. So that *Parrhasius's* drift seems to be this, to vilify the Books of his Adversaries, and those which he calls Mystical and Spiritual, in order to frighten his Readers from looking into them, although they know nothing of the matter, that so they may apply themselves wholly to the Study of Mr. *Le Clerc's* own Books, and readily give into all his and *Parrhasius's* Notions and Opinions.

II. But I'll do all that lies in my Power to frustrate such an ill design. As to the Reproaches which he loads me with, I'll let them melt away like Hail, wishing that God upon his Repentance may mercifully pardon him. I'll endeavour also to return Good for Evil, and what I have to say, shall have as near a relation to true *Erudition*, as any thing I have advanced in those Books which professedly treat of the Subject. In the first place then, I shall shew more at large the Nature and Importance of the Subject matter, which *Parrhasius* has concealed least it should be rightly known, because it is the first and chiefest of all, and I shall deduce it from the beginning; and afterward I shall subjoin Particular Remarks and Reflections upon the several Heads of the Censure, in the same Numerical Order as I have distinguished them above.

III. As the ground work of what I intend to offer, I shall lay down the following Propositions.

1. Every one that has not quite stifled, or that does not absolutely resist the inward Motions, and natural Propensions of his own Heart, (even *Parrhasius* and Mr. *Le Clerc*) seeks after and tends to the chief and supreme end, though perhaps not so strongly, nor so often, nor in so particular a manner as he ought.

2. The chief end of Man is Eternal Life.

3. God alone is the cause of all good, especially of that which is Salutary and Eternal.

4. Men are now of themselves corrupt, and that both as to their real Faculties, (whether spiritual, such as the Will and Understanding, &c. or Corporal) and as to that ideal Faculty of Reason, whereby they form Ideas of Things, and dispose of them several ways. That Man is in all these respects corrupt, I have sufficiently Demonstrated, so far as relates to our purpose, (a) when I treated of the Method of finding Truth.

II. Which shall not be confuted by clamours but by solid Reasons and a clear Explication of the things themselves.

III. The ground work of what follows.

(a) Part I. §.

35.

S. I



§. I suppose yet farther, That Man, corrupt as he is, is yet so far restored by God, that he is free not indeed to cause or produce good of himself, but to admit and receive it when offer'd to him by the cause thereof; and that he is also at liberty to refuse and reject it. And this we have at large and in several Places demonstrated elsewhere \*.

\* Vid. *Oecon. Div.* Vol. iii. Chap. vi. §. 10.

These grounds being laid down, we will now come nearer to the Point, and enquire first, and that more generall, how Men could govern themselves with respect to these things: And in doing this, we shall find ourselves obliged to reduce the whole matter to two ways, or to two Principal Heads.

IV. *The Origin and first Principle of true and false Religion.*

IV. Thus, for Instance, if we consider Man as endeavouring and aspiring after his chief and supreme End, and that he is perswaded that Life Eternal is that end, he will either immediately make use of his real and inward Faculties, viz. The Heart, Soul and Understanding, in order to obtain the same, and that in its own Cause, or in God the cause and Author of all Good, and to him he will surrender his Desire, his Understanding, and all the other Faculties of his Mind, that he may produce and accomplish that Life in him: Or he will make use of the shadowy Faculty of Reason, wherein he will form some sort of Idea of Life Eternal, according to the Disposition of his own dark and corrupt Reason, and in order to seek after and obtain this imaginary Life, he will apply himself to the same Faculty of Reason, for Light, to teach him what that Life is, and what are the ways and means of attaining it; to afford him strength to govern his Affections and Inferiour Faculties, and so to render him worthy of Life Eternal, about which notwithstanding he is so very little Solicitous, That he spends the greatest Part of his Life about perishable and (not to lay worse) vain and Empty Trifles.

V. *The True, Real, Divine or Christian Religion, what?*

V. The first of these ways of living and acting constitutes *Divine Religion*; or which is the same thing, 'Tis that wherein the Substance of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION consists, which is to worship God in Spirit and in Truth, or to yield up all our real and true Faculties to God, the Author, and the worker of all Good, of all Light, of all Happiness and Salvation; to whom therefore is ascribed

ascribed all Love, Honour and Glory for ever and ever.

VI. The other, constitutes *Philosophical or Rational, Ideal, and Counterfeit Religion*, and at this time, makes that which we may call GENTILE CHRISTIANITY; That is, 'tis the Art or Practice of Raising and Forning to ones self by the Activity of his own Reason, Ideas and Pictures of things Divine, of Reasoning about them, and of governing and Restraining the outward Faculties whereby we correspond and converse with the rest of Mankind, so as becomes honest Men, and as those that excell the Beasts in the Exercise of Reason and in the Government of this World, who therefore highly value and esteem the Industry, Power and Activity of their Reason, and Glory in the same, and thereby greatly flatter and Indulge Self-love in themselves.

VII. To the first sort belonged in all Ages all Holy Souls, especially the Patriarchs, the Prophets, and all the Penmen of the Holy Scriptures: JESUS CHRIST himself and his Apostles, all the faithful of the Primitive Church, all the first Doctors and Fathers thereof, and especially the Renowned St. *Austin*: All the Mystical Divines, and finally all others who have been endued with solid Knowledge, or that have deserved the Name of Christians.

VIII. To the other sort belonged among the Jews, the Saducees; among the Gentiles, not a few of the Philosophers, especially those of whom St. *Paul* speaks in the first Chapter of the *Romans*; and among those who have (undeservedly) born the Name of Christians, all those who are fill'd and puffed up with false, or rather with meer superficial Learning only: Those that are called *Pelagians*, to whom in these latter Days another Sect called *Socinians* have joined themselves; and in short all the Trumpeters and Advocates of Heathenish, Philosophical, Logical or Rational and Ideal, and Counterfeit Christianity; who although they Study the Holy Scriptures, and appeal to them, yet they draw nothing from them but what relates to the Faculty of Reason, viz. Dry Ideas accommodated to the Capacity and Taste of their own blind Reason, and governed and disposed according to the Rules of their own blind Philosophy.

As for my own part, I have, as far as God has enabled me, endeavoured in the sincerity of my Heart in all my Writings to serve the Interests of true Religi-

VI. The false, Ideal and Philosophical Religion what?

VII. The followers of Real and True Religion.

VIII. The followers of Ideal and Philosophical Religion.

on, and to recommend and promote the same in the World: But Mr. *Le Clerc*, seems to have made it his sole aim in all his Writings, to propagate the other, and to expose the first to all the Contempt and Ridicule that he could think of: For although he shews himself almost every where in his Books, to be a great master of Human Learning, yet 'tis evident, to use the words of a late Divine of (a) *Gronningen*, *That he makes use of that stock of Learning only by way of cover or safe conduct, that he may the better introduce his Corruptions into Divinity.*

(a) J. Goussier consider.  
Theol. p. 5.

IX. *The True and only cause of the Difference between me and Mr. Le Clerc and the Author of the Parrhasiana.*

IX. And this indeed is the *Punctum Saliens*, as I may say, the Original Cause and the true Ground of the Difference between him and me; this is the true Reason of all that horror which he has conceived both against the real Operations of God upon our Internal Faculties (which he calls Fanaticism) and against the Holy Fathers of the Primitive Church, against St. *Austin* especially, yea, and against the Mysticks, and also against me. And seeing all these Consequences appear clearly from *Parrhasius's* Censure, we have here the cause *a priori*, of that Declamation, which otherwise would appear a confused, indigested and unreasonable Rapsody of Words.

Having thus opened the State of the Case, let us now consider what may be the Importance thereof.

X. *The Importance of the subject matter in debate.*

X. If the Controversy was about a matter of little moment, or about any thing which concerned my self only, I should then hold my Tongue, nor would I suffer the Readers to distract their Minds, or waste their time about a matter of no use or Importance. But the Dispute is indeed about a matter of the greatest Importance, and which concerns all and every Man, without excepting any.

The Controversy is about Life, Salvation, and Eternal Happiness, and about the Efficient and Operating Cause thereof, without which true and only cause, all Men would of necessity be deprived of Happiness, the Effect thereof.

XI. *Life Eternal what, and wherein it consists.*

XI. *Life Eternal*, is what concerns us all to mind, 'tis our proper Business; and as we are created for this end, so ought we to endeavour after the true Knowledge thereof, and of the Cause, and of the means which we must use in order to attain the same. What it is, is evident to any one that considers the matter from the Terms themselves. *Life*, That which is truly and properly Life, That which is truly and solidly Eternal and Happy, cannot consist with-  
out



out the alone Fountain of Life and Happiness, and of all Good. It necessarily includes then a Communion and Union with that Fountain, that is, with God, who seeing he is an infinitely immense Spirit, and is originally the one and only Good, it evidently follows that LIFE ETERNAL consists in the fruition of God, dwelling in us, Manifesting and communicating himself, and living and acting in us, and filling us with infinite and eternal Joys.

XII. As God created Man at first by his Word (or Son) and Holy Spirit, he was not immediately put in possession of Eternal Life, but had only the first Principles thereof Implanted in him; there was some Intercourse and Communion between him and God, which had he cultivated, and co-operated with them, by offering himself up to God, and turning his real and inward Faculties, viz. his Desires, his Heart, his Understanding and his Affections freely and continually to him, and habituated himself to such Exercises; God on the other hand by his Word and Spirit, would have more and more manifested himself, his Operations, and all other good Things in him, and in his said Faculties, until at last in his own time, he had communicated himself, and every thing in himself to him in the amplest and most consummate manner; So that the same God who first made and planted the Seeds of Life Eternal in Man, and afterwards, upon his corresponding with the same, made them encrease and grow up to Maturity, would have been both the first Efficient and the last Consummating Cause or Author of Life Eternal; for which Reason all the Honour and Glory is due to God alone.

XIII. But now that we are depraved by sin from our very Conception, we are born miserable, not only without those Beginnings and Springs of Eternal Life, which the Word of God that created our first Parent communicated and implanted in him; but all the Superior and more Real Faculties of the Soul are stupified, darkned and pester'd with evil Dispositions, not to mention the like or more deplorable Condition of the inferiour Faculties, and especially of the superficial and shadowy Faculty of Reason, and hence it comes that those first beginnings of Life Eternal, which were given in order to the attainment of the fullness thereof, cannot be restored in our Faculties by its cause, unless our now depraved and deadned Faculties be first taken out of that state of Incapacity

XII. How God would have been the cause and Author of Life Eternal in Man, if he had not sinned.

XIII. After sin the depraved Faculties of Man must be renewed, and the Principles of Life Eternal again infused, and that God only can do the same.

(which is very great) and be restored to that first state, or very near it. Finally, who can work such a change in a Man, and renew the inward depraved Faculties of his Soul: Who I say can do this but the Creator of Man and the Former of Souls, the Omnipotent Word of God, or the Son of God, by whom the Father made all things? and after the Faculties are restored and made whole again, who can bestow and infuse the Principles and Seeds of Life Eternal, and at last bestow the fullness thereof upon them, but the Fountain of Eternal Life himself?

XIV. *Our Duty as to these things.* The Sum of the Christian Religion.

XIV. This being the case, it remains that as to our part, we know that we are placed here in time, in order to imploy the same in preparing and fitting ourselves for Eternal Life; and that this is to be done by curing our said Faculties, and acquiring those Seeds and first Principles of Life Eternal: Now these things we shall do aright and as we ought, if forsaking all useles and evil Thoughts and Occupations, we convert and turn ourselves, our Hearts, and all our superior, inward and more real Faculties (which are the subject of Happiness) to God himself who made us, and who alone is able both to restore us and to bestow upon us himself and all his Blessings, Praying him, who is the Fountain and Author of all Good, that out of his infinite Mercy and Bounty he would vouchsafe unto us Strength and Light, and Love, in order to enable us to purify and adorn our Hearts, that so, even in this Life, we may possess him, though imperfectly, and by way of beginning at least, and that *Christ* may come unto us, and with the Father and Holy Spirit take up his abode in us, and from hence forward govern and protect us during the remainder of our Life against all the innumerable and powerful Enemies of our Salvation; that so when this Life is finished, he may communicate himself fully to us, and perfect that work which he had before begun and cherished in us. And thus all Honour and Glory will redound to him alone for ever; and this indeed is the sum and substance of the whole Christian Religion.

XV. *The Lies which Satan has forged against these things.*

What the Pelagian Heresy is.

XV. But in opposition to these Truths, which are every where inculcated in the Scriptures, the Enemy of our Salvation has for many Ages past broached and propagated his deadly Lies, thereby to do what

he could, to bereave Men of Eternal Happiness. He could not bear to see Men turn their inward and more real Faculties, which pant and hunger after the Divine Irradiations and Operations to God. He has done what in him lay wholly to suppress them. He stirred up the empty Faculty of Reason, and the activity thereof; and thereby put Men upon seeking barren Ideas and painted Images, (the Works of their own Hands, of their Power and Activity) and upon reasoning and disputing about them, that so they might glory in these things, as if they were therefore Gods themselves, or Divine Persons, or as if these their Works and Idols had something Divine in them, as if they were so many Divine Lights, and could contribute to bring those that rely upon them to a Divine State. The same grand Enemy has not permitted them so much as to suspect or imagine that true Life, that Life Eternal for which we were created, is the Possession of God, Dwelling, Living and Operating in us; but only more generally, that 'tis a Life better than this Temporal Life, (which may agree even with the Alcoran) That we are not born so impotent, nor our present degenerate state so unfit for the same as some would have it; that we have no occasion to pray for, or to expect that God should bestow upon us his Strength and Light, or that he should operate in us himself to prepare and fit us for Salvation; and much less that the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit should come to illuminate and govern and protect and live in us; that these are nothing but idle Dreams and mere Fanaticism. That the Faculties of Reasoning and Acting are the chiefest of all, and also sound enough, so that if we improve and exercise them by the means of Logick and Philosophy, and by that literal Knowledge of the Scriptures, which those Sciences will help us to acquire, and then do all that we can to live and practice accordingly, that then we are in a safe way to that better Life which the natural Man has conceived or imagined for himself. Now this is that capital Heresy called *Pelagianism*, the Parent, the Foundation, the Soul and the Life it self of *Socinianism*, so that all the other *Socinian* Errors are but consecratories of this, which like so many Accidents would immediately fall of themselves, if this Poisonous Root, which is as the subject and ground of them all was once extirpated from Mens Minds.



XVI. No Error can be more dangerous; seeing it is inconsistent with the attainment of Life Eternal.

XVI. Now the Danger of this Error is so great that nothing can be more. Nor am I moved to say so out of an inordinate Zeal, which often prompts Men to condemn all others to Eternal Flames, who happen to differ from them in Opinion. 'Tis the Nature of the thing itself, and not I, that evinces the greatness of this dangerous Error; for it takes away the *Efficient Cause* of our *Salvation*, and will not allow that GOD does heal, and enlighten and operate in our Souls, and that he is the sole Director of all that great Work: It destroys the inward *Disposition* (or *Inclination*) of the Soul to *that Cause*, and to the effect thereof; namely, to *Salvation*; it takes away the Sense of our own *Impotence* and *Corruption*, and it quenches our thirst and desire after an *Omnipotent* and quickening Saviour; that is, it wholly subverts and destroys true Faith: It takes away the place itself, or the *proper subject* both of *Happiness*, and of the *Cause thereof*, and the necessary *Disposition* of the Soul towards it; that is, it takes away the internal ground, and all our *Passive* and inward *Faculties*; the Nature whereof is such that they cannot produce nor make to themselves Objects, but can only suffer themselves to be acted upon by their proper Objects, and receive and rejoice in all the *Beatifick Sensations* which these raise and excite in them. And in the room of these it substitutes the proud Idol of an active superficial Intellect, or of the Faculty of Human Reason, which being corrupt itself, and trusting either wholly to its own Strength, or taking to its Assistance the literal meaning of the Scriptures only, forms and delights itself with superficial, cold, dead, or even deformed and monstrous Ideas and Pictures of God and of Things Divine; and by these means it frames to itself a certain Political and Counterfeit Probity, which it believes will carry it safely to Heaven. Now there cannot be a more pernicious Error invented than this is. A Jew, Turk, or Heathen, if in sincerity of Heart, and from a deep Sense of their own Impotence they address themselves to their Creator, may without all peradventure be saved by that Omnipotent and Eternal Word of God which created and preserves them, and from whom every humble and sincere Motion in a Soul mistrusting itself, and having recourse to its Author, proceeds, who is the Word and Son of God himself, and who excites and enlivens those Motions as the Seeds of true Faith, in such

such Souls as do not resist him through voluntary and obstinate Pride; and if they on the other hand correspond with such inward Motions and Suggestions, there is no Reason to doubt but that he will do more and more for them, and graciously procure them all the necessary helps and means, both Internal and External, whereby they may attain to a state of Salvation. The case is quite otherwise with a Mind infected with *Pelagianism*, and obstinately puffed up with an Opinion of its own sufficiency; a Mind that hides and dissembles its own Indigence, Misery and Impotence to any thing that's truly and really Good; a Mind that contemns its Physician and its own inward Faculties, and that renounces the alone Worker of its Salvation; a Mind that builds all upon the rotten Foundation of the active Power of its own Understanding, or the Faculty of its own Reason, upon which whatever Truth is built, whatever Notions of Vertue, Faith, Hope, Love, Charity and other Moral Duties, are raised, they are but Pictures and Ideas formed by its own corrupt Activity; they are barren and lifeless, yea, they are only the deformed and airy Images and Appearances of Things and solid Vertues; they are only the Pictures of Political and Philosophical Probity, which is puffed up with the Wind of Self-love, and which in this Life cannot hold out against the Temptations and Assaults of the Adversary, as is very well known to those, who notwithstanding all these poor helps, are yet often and upon very slight occasions, easily disturbed and dejected in their Minds; much less can they with such slight Armour stand firm and undaunted against the Winds and Floods of God's Judgment, which will beat down every House that is not built upon the Rock, or which for its Foundation has not *Christ* dwelling in us, in whose strength we may do all Things, upon whom we may rest and fix ourselves, and in whom, *If one does not abide as the Branch does in the Vine*, so that the Vine impart its Life and Spirit, and fructifying Vertue to him, as to the branch, he shall be rejected of the Father and cast forth, and wither, with all his ideal and vain Philosophical and Political Vertues, and shall be gathered and cast into the FIRE and burnt, John 15. 4, 5.

VII. *The true State of the Controversy between Mr. Le Clerc, Parrhasius, &c. and those Authors (and particularly myself) with whom they are angry. The Design of both.*

XVII. Hitherto we have taken a view of the subject matter, and shewn the importance of what those Books and Authors treat of, against whom *Parrhasius* has therefore exclaimed in so confused a manner and at random, least his Readers should come to know what the thing itself was about which those Authors and Mr. *Le Clerc* and his Admirers differ : And that I might the better defeat such his design, I found it necessary to explain my self more at large upon those Heads, as I have done here, and that also because of all those that have written against Mr. *Le Clerc*, none has stated this matter so well and so fully as was necessary, and as they ought to have done. For, generally speaking, all their Disputes with him have been taken up about matters of lesser moment, and very often about things of no Consequence at all. For my part, 'tis my Desire and Intention that whatever either of us have or may find fault with in the other, be looked upon and esteemed as nothing in comparison of this one most important Point, which has an immediate and inseparable Relation to the Life, the Essence, the Foundation, and the Substance of Christianity, and the Eternal Salvation of every one ; and to which indeed I and the Authors and Books which Mr. *Le Clerc* condemns on the one part, and he himself on the other, take quite different ways, and endeavour each so to recommend his own Judgment and Opinion, that, if such a thing could be, they would desire that Heaven and Earth might be filled with the same, and that all things might agree and center therein for ever.

As for my part, I confess I wish nothing more, nor do I desire to live and act either here or for ever, but only that all Honour, Praise and Glory be ascribed by all Creatures for ever, to God alone ; the sole worker, the Author and the Fountain of all good, especially of that which is Eternal, Salutory, Solid, and truly Substantial : And that on the other side, Rebellious, Ungrateful, Monstrous and absurd sinners ; who, though of themselves they be nothing, and are even worse than nothing, would yet have it that that which is not, can be the cause of that which is ; That there is more in the effect than in the cause, that nothing can produce some thing, that evil can be the cause of Good, crooked of Strait, impure of Pure, Sick of that which is sound, a thing condemned of that which is saved, &c. I say, that on the contrary,



contrary, sinners may take to themselves shame and (to speak in Scripture Language) *confusion of Face*, for having ever admitted or cherished in their Hearts such an Unnatural and Monstrous Folly; and that such as are desirous of Eternal Life, might be forewarned and guarded against such pernicious Notions, I have out of that tender regard which I have for their Eternal Welfare, taken care in all that I have written and published, as far as I could and as opportunity served, fairly and sincerely to set before them that Salutory and most Necessary Doctrine, as the only Antidote against the above-mentioned capital Error, and as the main but and scope to which every thing else, and all the Actions of this Life ought to be directed; and hence it happened, that when I met with any Arguments against this Divine Truth in other Books, especially in those published by Anonymous Authors, I endeavoured according to my Ability to answer and refute them, and I even wished they might have been condemned to Eternal Darkness, to which they naturally lead Men, provided those who were seduced might be saved and delivered from them.

XVIII. But that was not so well taken by those who had determined stiffly to maintain and propagate the contrary Doctrine, and especially by the Authors of some Anonymous Books, which, as to this subject, I had confuted. Among these Mr. Le Clerc was the chief, who when he saw that I had refuted the Pelagian and Socinian Arguments of those Books, after a manner which he had never seen before, nor expected, and which left no room for any of the Pelagian Reasons or Exceptions, took it very much to Heart: and therefore to frustrate and oppose the Good which might Result from that Performance, in his *Bibliothèque Universelle*; he gave such an Account of my Divine Oeconomy, and imposed so many Falsities, and either Dissembled or Perverted my true meaning, and branded me with such opprobrious Names, as he thought would deter his Readers from looking into those Books, and from enquiring into the Truth of the matter itself, that so he might for the future, by the help of his prophane Learning and painted Eloquence, the more easily and without opposition Insill that most pernicious Doctrine into Mens Minds, and that in his Philosophical, Historical, Critical and Theological Writings, as well in Latin as in French;

XVIII. That Mr. Le Clerc began to write against me in particular, because my Writings oppose and cross his design.

and

and he has done it with all the Artifice and fraud that the most crafty among the Learned could have possibly thought of.

XIX. *Why I answered him by a Letter.*

XIX. I had some hopes that he might have been brought back into the right way, upon shewing him his own Errors, and setting the Truth in a clearer Light. And this I endeavoured to do in the foregoing Letter in such a manner, that had not his Mind been very much corrupted, he would rather have join'd Issue with the Truth, than resisted it in so absurd and Ridiculous a manner as his *Pamphlet* has done.

XX. *That none of the true Remonstrants ought to oppose the Doctrine of Mans Corruption, and Impotence, and of the Grace of God working inwardly, as I have expounded it.*

XX. And indeed I cannot sufficiently wonder why any should be so Refractory, that although the Doctrine of Man's Corruption and Impotence, and of the gracious Operations of God in our Hearts, be proposed to them in such a manner, that none of their Five famous Articles, in the Sense which they call theirs, is shaken, nor any of those Inconveniences follow, which alone they profess to abhor, and against which they object, yet that they should be, and still obstinately continue adversaries of that Divine Grace, without which all things would tumble into the utmost disorder and confusion. Had I affirmed that Men are so corrupt and impotent through sin, that they could not by any means or Power whatever be restored; or that that Power, Strength, or Grace, was offered only to a few, and not likewise to the rest; or that it was of such a Nature, that when offered, it could not be rejected, or that when once admitted it could not be lost, and such like, I should not have wondred to have found Mr. *Le Clerc*, and all the Remonstrants, against me in these things; for it might be alledged, that upon these Principles, some would be drove to despair, and others flatter themselves into a dangerous Security; that Men would from thence seek and pretend Excuses for all their sins, wickednesses and impenitence; that they would destroy and invalidate the strongest Motives to Virtue and to the practice of good Works, with many other absurd Consequences, which they used to object against those from whom they therefore separated themselves. But when my Sense, as I have often declared at large, is, that corrupt and impotent Man cannot by his own Strength, but only by the Power and Grace of God working in him, be restored; that this Power, Strength, and Operating Grace of God,



is offered by God to all Men without Distinction; that 'tis of such a Nature that if a Man will attend to the Sollicitations thereof, and resign himself to it, it will by Degrees work out his Salvation for him, and restore him to a state of Perfection; but if he refuse to listen to the same, and chuse rather to give Ear to the Sollicitations of the Flesh, of *Satan*, and the World, he will then through his own inexcusable Folly continue in his Corruption, and at last bring upon himself the extremest Misery; that his liberty does not cause or produce, but only admits and receives the saving Operations of Grace, the Reality and Glory whereof is only due to God the sole Author and Fountain of all Good, and that all that Man has to do is to take care, that he do not listen nor assent to, nor Co-operate with the Sollicitations of the Devil, the World and the Flesh; but that he resign himself wholly to those Divine Operations wrought in him by the Power of God, and that when once he has done so, he be careful not suddenly to withdraw himself from them, but to persevere Faithfully (in and through the Assistance of God) in a continual resignation of himself; and that according as he behaves himself in this matter, God, who is a righteous Judge, will either Reward or Punish him: When I say, I had shewed all these things at large, and removed every Difficulty that attended them, I little expected that those who expressed their Dissatisfaction with the Doctrines of rigid Predestination, and particular irresistible Grace, would in any ways oppose or ridicule those Truths, or that they would have used their utmost Endeavours to persuade Men against the Power and Grace of God, working out our Salvation in us.

XXI. And they had the less Reason to attempt any such Thing, because they could never bring any positive and solid Reasons, nor alledge any shocking Difficulties against it, but only the Arrogance and wild Inclinations of their Corrupt Nature, and of the Faculty of Proud Reason, deluded by its own Folly and the Suggestions of *Satan*, and consenting to them, whereby their Minds are withdrawn from God, so that they neither seek his Honour and Glory, nor desire to be enlighten'd and govern'd by his Divine Operations in them; but on the other side adhere to themselves, to the grateful and pleasing Sense of their own Glory, Honour and Worth, and even to innumerable other

XXI. That the inward saving Grace of God, cannot be disproved nor disparaged by any positive Reasons, but only by the Arrogance of Nature and the Suggestions of *Satan*. Foolish



Foolish Studies and Occupations ; and seeing the gracious Operation and inward Sollicitation of God in us is a great Enemy to these Things, behold, this is the true cause, why Corrupt Men, Lovers of themselves and what they call their own, are so very averse to the internal Grace of God ; and in this matter they are so blinded and hardened by the Enemy of Souls, that they have spared no Pains to disparage that adorable Grace of God, and to make a jest of it, and expose it to the World under the ridiculous Names of *Fanaticism* and *Enthusiasm*, together with all those who embrace and adore it, and put all their Hopes in it, as the only Thing that they can take hold of to save them in the General Shipwrack.

XXII. *There can be nothing more dangerous nor more absurd in the matter of Salvation than to reject and deride the internal Grace of God.*

\* Jer. 2. 12.

XXII. Now I know no Crime, with respect to the matter of Salvation and true Religion, greater or more absurd than this of rejecting and ridiculing the inward and saving Grace and Operations of God in and upon our Hearts. Yea, even God himself upon the like occasion, calls upon the Heavens themselves to stand amazed at such a Thing, crying out by the Prophet : \* *Be astonished, O ye Heavens, be ye horribly afraid and very desolate, saith the Lord ; for my People have committed two Evils ; they have forsaken me, the Fountain of Living Waters, and hewn out unto themselves Cisterns, broken Cisterns that can hold no Water.* These two greatest Evils, the Desertion of God, and the setting up an abominable Idol in his Room, are now in their bloom, and flourish most mightily with all the modern Adversaries of the Internal saving Grace of God. When the Design of God is to communicate himself, his Spirit, and all his Wonders and Vertues every where and to all Men, it may be said that these not only resist, but that they even hate to have God Present in them, that they are afraid lest the Spirit of God should be efficacious in their Hearts, yea, that they are in great concern lest he should sometime or other act in them in that luminous and divine Manner which is peculiar to himself, or least the Promises of his Divine Operations and Gifts, and even of himself should in any sort respect, or be thought to belong to them ; so solicitous are they, to pervert and enervate all the Passages in the Holy Scriptures relating to this matter, and that in a most absurd manner, so that all the innumerable Promises of God concerning his giving and pouring out his Spirit upon all Flesh, and the Operations thereof in our Hearts, they

they turn off from themselves, and would have it that they either belong wholly to the Apostles and the Men of the Apostolic Age, or else they apply them to some Things that are merely External, and which suit with our way of Reasoning according to our best Rules of Logic and Criticism. Thus, for Instance, These Promises of God, \* *I will put my Laws in their Minds, and I will write them in their Hearts,* must be reduced to this according to those wise Interpreters, and the import of them in their sense must be, "I will so order the External Means, that by their help you shall be enabled to imprint and retain in your Memory the ( *Pelagian* and *Socinian* ) Ideas, which your Reason shall by the help of Criticism and Philosophy extract from the Letter of the Scripture." Behold here, the surprizing Folly and Madness of Mankind, who are not ashamed thus to set up those Idols of Reason, Criticism and Philosophy, in the room of God himself, and instead of our real and internal Faculties, and the living and powerful Impressions of God upon them!

XXIII. And in this indeed our *Parrhasius*, does very much, and almost every where Pride himself; yea in his *Parrhasiana*, his dotage gains upon him to that Degree, that he expressly lays, \* that the Promises of God that he will sometime increase his Lights among Christians, which shall bring to pass a great Change among them, must be fulfilled by the means and INTERVENTION OF REASON AND CRITICISM. So that all those Magnificent Promises of God concerning his Spirit, and the Knowledge of himself and of *Christ*, wherein is Life Eternal, and about the Lights of his Wisdom, and about all the other Graces and Immense Treasures of the Riches which lie hid in *Christ*, which shall be poured forth in a very bountiful Manner upon all Men in the last times by God himself, will amount to as much as if God had only told Men, *I will make you good Criticks and Rationalists, and such as by the help of Reason and Criticism ye shall be able to know and obtain every Thing for your selves.* Who would not be ashamed to exalt that infamous Prostitute, the Faculty of Human Reason, which even in our first Parents were drawn by Satan into the Fall, thro' their Reasonings upon, and Critical Interpretations of the Words of God. *God made Man upright, but they sought out many Reasonings.* Eccl. 7. 29. ver. vulg. And ever since in all their Posterity,

\* Jer. 31. 33.  
Heb. 8. 8.  
and 10. 16.

XXIII.  
*Parrhasius's*  
*Ravings as to*  
*these Things.*  
\* *Parrh. Tom.*  
I. p. 415.

Posterity, has been almost wholly deflower'd and corrupted by the Instigation of Satan, and by an unaccountable Itch of wrangling about Words, to such a height even to this present time, as to set up a most impure Harlot, without acknowledging the Contagious Nature of her Distemper, without renouncing and repenting of the same, without passing thro' a state of Purification and Death, and without being quicken'd a-new and restored to a state of Health and Purity; to set it up I say as the very substance of God's most precious Promises, instead of the Chast Wisdom of God, and in the place of the Holy Spirit of the Lord, and thereby to prostitute the Throne and dwelling Place of the most high to a Strumpet of Satan, and set her over all Christians to illuminate, and govern, and conduct them to Heaven? Could ever the Enemy of Souls have hatched and brought forth a more monstrous Birth than this Hellish Invention? Hence also it comes that some would have it that a \* Man is really Converted to God by his Ratiocinations; and by turning and directing the Course of the Animal Spirits in the Brain from certain traces and ways into others; and by repeating the same acts so long until the said new ways be well beaten, and at last end in good confirmed Habits, and such like monstrous Fancies; to which we may justly add the Critical Interpretation (shall I say or depravation) of that celebrated † Place, wherein *Christ* most expressly teaches us that the true *Knowledge* of himself and of his Mysteries must come from, and be ascribed to the Virtue and Power of the *Father* alone, who *hides* the same from the *Wise* and *Prudent*, and *reveals them unto the Simple*, who like little Children, know not how to use any Art or Ratiocination, but instead thereof, offer up their Hearts, their Understandings and all the Powers and Faculties of their Souls wholly to *Christ* to display his Power in them, and to illuminate, and govern, and direct them in all Things as he shall think fit: Wherefore he also joyfully *gives Thanks* to the Father, as the alone Author of that great Good, which he had hid from the great Doctors and Proud Rationalists of the World, who gloried in their own, and not in the Wisdom and Operations of God. Now this most admirable Passage we should be obliged according to Mr. Le Clerc's || Critical and Rational

\* *Entretiens sur Dic. Mathématiques de Theol.* pag. 27, 28, &c.

† *Matth. II.* 25.

|| *See the Notes upon Matth.*

*II. 25, &c. in the French New Testament; Translated by Mr. Le Clerc.*

way,



way, to interpret in this manner. That the Thing or Matter which our Saviour treats of there, is the proposition and persuasion of this Historical Fact, *That Christ was sent by the Father, and that his Doctrine is true.* That those *little Ones*, to whom the Father revealed this, were such as were better versed in the *Art of Reasoning* than the *Jewish Doctors and Scribes*, altho' these looked upon them as Children and illiterate, when yet they were better Logicians and Naturalists than the said Doctors themselves. That the *Revelation* on the part of God the Father, were those *External Miracles* which he wrought by the Power of the Father; and that with regard to those *little Ones*, it was the *Conclusions* which they made according to the *Rules of right Reasoning*, and as became good Logicians. That the *Wise and Prudent*, from whom God hid those Things, were the *Scribes and Pharisees, and the Jewish Doctors*, who were indeed well enough versed in their own *Traditions*, but were very bad Reasoners, and Explained the Scriptures against all the *Rules of right Reason and sound Criticism*: For as to Criticism and Logic they were mere Blunderers. That the *bidding*, whereby the Father hid those Things from them, consists in this, that God permitted that they should not examine that by Reason and Criticism, which seemed to be contrary to their *Ideas and Traditions*: So that God left them to their own dark Understandings, or to the perverse use of Criticism and Logic, and all the consequences thereof. So that *Christ's* meaning, and the genuine sense of the Words must be this, "I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast suffer'd this Historical Proposition, this rational Conclusion, *that I am sent by thee*, not to be made by those who neither Reason or Explain the Scriptures according to the Rules of right Reason and sound Criticism: But that thou wouldst have me work such great Miracles, that those who Reason better according to the Rules of right Reasoning, than those Jewish Doctors do, might pick out and draw from thence this Conclusion and Persuasion, by the help of Reason and the natural Laws of Logic, that I am sent by thee." Who I say, can Refrain, I will not say from Laughter, but from Tears, to hear such ridiculous stuff.

XXIV. *That Parrhasius is in the wrong to suppose that Reason is the only Faculty we have to understand and know Things by. That we have other more real Faculties, and better Lights than that of Reason.*

XXIV. True it is, this is not a proper Place to Examine and Confute all those Absurdities, with his other misinterpretations of Scripture, (which I have already \* done in some measure elsewhere) we cannot however but observe how much *Parrhasius* is mistaken, and how he abuses Reason, when in order to vindicate and defend the same he every where cries out

“ † that no Body can speak against Reason, but who would seduce Men, and persuade them to believe any Thing that he pleases; that without the Lights of Reason, we can understand nothing that is Revealed; that Reason cannot be forsaken but that we must fall into Fanaticism:” And the like: For in these Things (not to mention that 'tis wrong to suppose right Reason, when yet 'tis Sick and most Corrupt) *Parrhasius* ought to consider that

\* Oecon. Div. Vol. 5. of the Co-Operation ch. 1.

he confounds, as has been often made appear, Things that are quite different; namely, the true Intelligence or Understanding and the Lights thereof, with the Faculty of Reason, and with the acts, and painted, and delusive Light thereof. The Understanding, or the Capacity of knowing God and Things Divine, is a most essential part of Man, 'tis the Eye of the Soul wherewith it sees all the Objects of the Intellectual World; but 'tis Passive, like the Eye; and it receives Light from God and from its proper Objects, as the Eye does in the outward World.

† Parrh. pag. 417, 434, &c.

But Reason, or the Capacity of forming Ideas of Things, as Painters draw Pictures, according to their own Fancy, and of Reasoning about them, is not essential to Man (as we have || demonstrated elsewhere) and is a certain accessory gift of exercising itself after a superficial and sporting manner, so that should a Man want that activity, he might not therefore want true Light, neither inward nor outward; for God can discover both himself, and the Intellectual World, yea, and even the Ideas of the External World, to a Passive Understanding and Capacity, without any act on the part of our Reason.

|| Cogit. Rat. in Dissert. Prelim. §. 43, 45. Oecon. Div. Vol. 2. ch. 20. De Method. part 2. §. 1, 3. pag. 51. And De Erudit. lib. 1. §. 6, 10. and lib. 2. §. 5, 7.

XXV. Which is Illustrated by Similitudes.

XXV. Suppose we then, a Man for some time to suspend the Activity and Ideas of his own Reason, cannot God therefore and Spiritual Objects irradiate his Spiritual Faculties, and shine in them? Suppose we, another that has not yet used his Reason (such as Children, and even some advanced in Years) must therefore the External Light of Nature cease to operate, and insinuate it self into his External Faculties,

or into his Eyes, because tosooth he does not use his Reason? Suppose we again, that any one wants the real and outward Faculty of seeing, that is, that he is Blind, and that notwithstanding of his being Blind, he is endued with a most active, subtile, and sagacious Faculty of Reasoning, and such as can order and dispose every Thing that it conceives or Reasons about, very regularly and methodically; here I ask, whether such a Blind Man can with all his Sagacity and Ratiocination, by the strength of his own Reason, excite, I will not say, the glorious Light of the Sun, and the Colours, and the lively Characters of the Things of this World; but even whether he can form so much as any Ideas or Images of such Things in his Conception, or in Reason itself? Who will not own that such a Person can form nothing but Chimera's and Lyes by his Reason, and by the imaginary Light of his Reason, so long as his External Faculty of seeing, or his Eyes are not cured, and then passively exposed to the Sun and the luminous Objects of this World, that so they may act upon them, and communicate to them Light and the lively forms of Things, before and without any act of Reason, altho' afterwards she may divert her self about them, and about the Formation of Mental Idea's and Ratiocinations? The Case is the same where Men are Blind in a Spiritual Sense, that is, when their Intelligent Part, or the Faculty of their Passive Understanding, is shut up, when yet at the same time they may have the Exercise of their active Understanding, and of the Faculty of Reason in a very signal Manner. Should such a Blind Man (and such we are all from our Corrupt Original) not have the Eye of his Soul opened, should that Passive Understanding, which is given for Divine and Spiritual Objects, but is now dead, or in a deep Lethargy, not be rouzed up by the Omnipotent Physician of Souls; should not the Divine Sun and all the Objects of the Divine and Spiritual World present themselves to it, and dart forth and infuse therein Light, and true, and luminous Conceptions of themselves; then with whatever Sagacity, Industry and Capacity the Reason of such a Blind Man should bestir itself, it not only could not produce in itself true Light, and lively and luminous Notions of Things Spiritual and Divine; but not so much as any Ideas and Representations of the same, how empty, superficial and barren soever; yea, it would be able to form nothing



but Chimera's, Trifles, and absurd and monstrous Fancies, such as are every where to be met with in the so celebrated Works of *Parrhasius*. Who then can say, in Spirituals as well as in Corporeals, that those who speak against the imaginary Light and Ideas in the Reason of a Blind Man, with a Design to carry him to the Physician and to Realities, *Mean to seduce him, or to persuade him to any thing that they please: That without the Ideas of that blind Reason, he can understand nothing of what shall be discovered to him; That he must fall into Fanaticism, or into a Ditch, if he desert that Faculty, which is so active and ready at forming Images and Ideas?* But all these things *Parrhasius* and his Hero might be told over and over again, and even until they cracked their Brains e'er they would leave off to confound (which they always and every where do) the passive Faculties, and the Lights and real Notions which we receive by them, both from Spiritual and Corporeal Objects, with the Active Faculty of Reason, with its barren and borrowed Light, and with the Airy Ideas thereof; or before they would be convinced, that these without them are nothing, and can do nothing, but what is Chimerical and Trifling; and that they without these are real and solid, and that they both are immense in themselves, and can do great Things.

XXVI. *Parrhasius does not like Mr. Le Clerc, assign the true Reason of his Cause, which is founded in Experience.*

XXVI. I wonder indeed that *Parrhasius*, among all the Arguments and Reasons whereby he endeavours to Defend Mr. *Le Clerc's* cause and his own, has omitted to mention a better and more substantial Reason, why he sticks to those Opinions, obstinately defends them, and does all he can to propagate them, and is in hopes that they will find a good reception with many. Mr. *Le Clerc* himself did long ago more plainly declare that Reason, in favour of his own Sentiments, in his *Bibliothèque Universelle*, in these Words, in which he commends the matter itself so much, that he seems secretly to laugh at those who should not take notice of it. (a) Some affirm. says he, *that all Men, should we wholly forbear confuting the Socinian Opinions, would insensibly without Sense become Unitarians or Socinians, and that in such manner that they could not tell how they came to be so; because the Opinions of those Men (the Socinians) are better accommodated to the capacity of the Vulgar, than those of the Orthodox, and are such as naturally present themselves to their Minds. For to a Human Mind, in as much*

(a) *Bibl. Univ. Tom. XV. Pag. 369.*

much as it is corrupted from its Birth, as it is separated from God, and left to itself, as it neither regards, nor is governed by any thing but its own Propensions, its own Wisdom, its own Illumination; and finally by the Solicitations of *Satan*; to such a Mind, I say, the *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Notions, do indeed very naturally present themselves, they being so mightily accommodated to the Animal Capacity of carnal and proud Men, that unless the Good Spirit of God interpose and infuse a more Divine Principle, to knock and penetrate and dwell in our Hearts, *All Men indeed would become insensibly without Sense Socinians and Pelagians, so that they would not know how they came to be so; because such Opinions are best accommodated to the Capacity, and to the Propension and State of Corrupt Nature both in the Vulgar, and in all Men born in sin and corruption.* And indeed *Socinianism* and *Pelagianism*, with all their Wisdom, is nothing else in effect but that very state of corrupt Nature, as it is now rendred so, by extinguishing the Divine Grace, and by yielding to its sinful Bents, and the Power of the Devil over it. All of us, as we are become corrupt and void of the Divine Operation of the Holy Spirit, are by Nature made and born *Pelagians* and *Socinians* as to our Principles; and if to this be added the continual Solicitations of the Devil inwardly, and the artful Representation of those Errors outwardly, we cannot but feel in ourselves that our depraved Reason, and haughty Inclinations are strongly inclined to favour and embrace those Errors. And this is the true Reason why the Nature of Man, which loves and stily adheres to itself, so Spontaneously inclines to those ways of Error; from which, after having by long use and custom made them its own, it can no more be separated and disintangled, than the Devil himself can be torn from his Darkness and Lyes: and hence also, they that sow such Tares, conceive no small hopes that many will receive and cherish and propagate them as much as ever they can.

XXVII. But he that will attend to the secret Impulses and Operations of the Good Spirit of God, seeking to save and restore corrupt Nature, and which he darts into our Hearts even from our Birth, and them who listen to the Solicitations of God more than to the corrupt Nature, and give themselves up to them.

XXVII. This fundamental Cause will have no Power over those of Satan

which would dwell there, and work out our Recovery and Salvation; and he that will from thence and from the good Exhortations and helps which God affords him outwardly in the Holy Scriptures, and by the Counsels of Good Men, learn truly to know himself, and begin to see that of himself he is nothing, and can do nothing; that he is corrupt throughout, and altogether Miserable, that he is wholly plunged into Darkness; that he is blind, perverse and rebellious, and that in his Nature he cherishes the Seeds of all Error, Wickedness and Rebellion; such an one, I say, that shall see and do these things, will abhor those Principles, which they so much boast of. as Hell itself and as the Fountain of all Evil; and turning to the Lord, the sole Author and Fountain of Light and Goodness, his chiefest Good, his Benefactor, his Physician, his Governor, his Defender, his Saviour, he will continually cry out with the most eminent Saints, (a) *Let me hear thy loving kindness, O Lord, betimes in the Morning, for in thee is my trust. Shew thou me the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my Soul unto thee. Deliver me, O Lord, from mine Enemies; for I flee unto thee to hide me. Teach me to do the thing that pleaseth thee for thou art my God. Let thy good Spirit lead me forth into the Land of Righteousness; and quicken me for thy Names sake, O Lord. For surely, (b) They that forsake thee shall perish: Thou destroyest all them that commit Fornication against thee. But 'tis good for me to hold me fast by God, and to put my trust in the Lord.*

(a) Psalm  
143.

(b) Psalm  
73.

These things I thought best to premise in general, because they are of the greatest Importance to all Men; and contain the true State and Marrow of the Controversy between Mr. Le Clerc and me; and for that they will also give great Light almost into all things, and especially to what I design to offer more particularly upon the *Paribashan* Censure; to which I now proceed.

More



More Particular

# REMARKS

BOTH

Theological and Critical

Upon the

*Parrhasian* Censure.



AS to the Personal Reflexions contain'd in the Censure, I shall take but little notice of them, that I may have the more time to prosecute (and that not slightly, as there shall be occasion) such Things as may be useful to the Readers.

And because it may be of use to detect the Sources and Principles of the *Parrhasian* Censure, I shall first of all do it in a few Words.

*Pelagianism*, which alone is what *Parrhasius* admires, is the Theology of SELF-LOVE.

The PRINCIPLES  
of the Parrhasian Censure.

Self-love is the love of ones own worth. Self-love the love would perswade ones self and others, That he is True, Just and Good, and endued with every Vertue. And this is properly Pride. *Self-love the great Principle of Pelagianism.*

This Pride denies and hates the first Truth, and contains also in it the first Lye. The FIRST TRUTH is this, that the Original Being (*viz.* God) is ; and that he is the Author and Cause of all Being and Reality ; of all *Being*, and *well-being*. The FIRST LYE is, that what of itself is a Non-

G 3

Entity

Entity, has yet a Being, and is the cause of Reality ; that a *Non-Entity* is the cause of *Entity* ; and that which of itself is *not Good*, is the real cause of *Good*. Hence proud Self-love is originally false and a liar ; It is also a *Hater* and *Slanderer* of the *Truth*.

The second,  
Injustice.

It is also *unjust* from the beginning, in not giving to every one his own ; to God, all Good, to itself nothing.

The third,  
Blindness.

From the want and hatred of the *Truth* comes also *Darkness*. Hence Self-love is by Nature *Blind*. Nor does it see, that while it desires to be counted *True*, *Just* and *Good*, it is deceitful, wicked and *Evil*. It is ignorant of its own Nature. But if in the room of that *Light* and *Truth* which it wants, it substitutes the *Efforts*, *Operations* and *Productions* of its own *Active Understanding*, or of *Reason* (which is also blind) it only multiplies to itself *Darkness*, *Evils* and *Lyes*.

The fourth,  
Malice and  
Cunning.

And hence it comes, that if it be proved and made appear from the *Truth*, that it is in a *Lye*, in *Injustice*, in *Evil* ; and that for all that 'twill neither die to itself, nor by its *Death* give *Glory* to *God* alone ; hence, I say, it comes, that it grows *Malicious*, and endeavours by all the *Artifice* and shifts it can possibly invent, both to defend what is its own, and to oppose every thing that is *True*, *Just* and *Good*.

The three  
Principal kinds  
of Artificial  
Malignity.  
Ibrasonism.

From this Artificial Malignity arise chiefly two or three sorts of *Frauds*, especially when the *Truths* proposed, and which it opposes, are such as it finds it self unable to refute. The first sort of *Fraud* is an *insolent huffing*, when it makes as if the *Things* which are advanced in opposition to it, were so weak and insignificant, that such a strong *Champion* as it is, ought not to vouchsafe an *Answer* to them, but to reject them with *Scorn* and *Reproach*. The second sort of *Fraud* is *Flattery*, when it pretends that these things do not at all, or but very little make against it ; and this happens when such things are advanced by *Persons* it stands in awe of, and whom therefore, as being the stronger *Adversaries*, it would fain soften and keep in good *Humour*. The third sort is, a more open and particular *Revenge*, by shewing how far it can carry its *Fury* and *Hatred* ; by this, it so violently Attacks some of its *Adversaries* with all the *Artifices* of *Lying*, *Injustice* and *Malice*, that it thinks

Flattery.

Impotent Re-  
venge.

thinks it shall thereby deter others from meddling with it for ever after.

He that would look for Instances of all these Things in *Parrhasius*, and in his *Parrhasiana*, will quickly find whether there be plenty of them there, or not. Come we now more particularly to the Censure, and that according to the Numbers which we annexed to the several Parts of it.

1. Self-love (out of its Pride and Blindness) seems always just to itself, whatsoever therefore it does, that is just. Therefore, to complain of it is unjust. Therefore those that have complained of the *Bibliothèque Universelle* (of Mr. *Le Clerc*) have done it unjustly, although they have shewn (as I have done in the foregoing Letter) that he has perverted almost every thing that he relates in it.

2. Self-love, from Artificial Malice, sometimes uses an Argument drawn from Envy and leading to Hatred, as Mr. *Le Clerc* himself has observed and disproved at large (a) elsewhere. But here *Parrhasius* little regards that, though upon this occasion it be nothing to the purpose. For what has *Antonia Bourignon* to do here? and why does *Parrhasius* falsely, and contrary to what has been publicly declared and is so well known, make her the head of a Sect, by calling me her follower? The Dispute here was not about that matter. But *Parrhasius* is displeased with *Antonia Bourignon's* Doctrine, and therefore, to make her odious, he would fain represent her as a Sectarian, because her Divinity is contrary to his *Pelagianism*. For, seeing she, even from her Infancy, observed that the Christians of these days sought and loved things Earthly, and not Eternal; and that they were led by the Spirit of Nature and corrupt Reason, and not by the Spirit and Mind of *Christ*; and seeing she prayed to God daily, that he would preserve her from that worldly Spirit, and bestow upon her the Mind and Spirit of *Christ*, and finally obtained the same; she left it confirmed by her Life, her Words and Writings, that the substance of Christianity, and the meaning and stress of the Holy Scriptures consist in this, that Men, laying aside the Love of Earthly Things, and of themselves and their own Wisdom and corrupt Reason, may become fit Vessels to receive the Holy Spirit of *Christ*, that so they may be quicken'd, instructed, Govern'd and fill'd therewith, as

(1.) *Parrhasius's* *Objecti-*  
*on of unjust.*

(2.) *Of the*  
*Argument*  
*from Envy.*

(a) In fine  
Logic. Dis-  
sert. de Argu-  
mento ab In-  
vidia ducto.



found Members are with the Spirit of their Head ; and that then, and not otherwise, they will become true Christians. Now seeing these things are Diametrically opposite to the *Pelagian* Sytem, 'tis not to be wondred at that *Parrhasius* brands those with the Invidious Name of Sectarians, who published, and who, agreeably to the Scriptures and to their own Consciences, and to the Testimony of God himself, believed these Things. But 'tis strange he did not see (through the blindness of Self-love) how that by this invidious Appellation of a Sectarian, he puts it in the power of every Body to cast the same Reflection upon Mr. *Le Clerc*, who left that Sect in which he was born, and went over to another, with a design, as every one says, under the umbrage of that Sect, to hide, cherish, and propagate the Opinions of another Sect, which has no great relation to Christianity.

(3.) Of his  
one little Jest.

3. I observed and complained in the foregoing Letter, how Mr. *Le Clerc* had loaded me with many Falsities, that he turned the best and most Salutary Things into Poison and Ridicule, and that he had exposed Men of the greatest Merit to publick Scorn and Contempt : And this, *Parrhasius* here, from the Principles of Self-love, as every body can't but observe, calls *but one little Jest*.

(4.) Full of  
Gall and Malice.

4. On the other hand, and from the same Principles, whatever in Justice and Truth, and in the sincerity of my Heart I answered, That *Parrhasius* says, *is full of Gall and Malice*. Nor indeed can self-esteem impose Names otherwise on things which are contrary to it ; than they do that are in a Bilious Fever (arising from the excessive Irregularities of self-Love) who fancy they see all Things Inverted, and Tinctured, as I may say, with Gall ; so that even the Physician himself, may by such a sick Person, be taken for a most malicious Enemy.

(5.) Of Mr.  
*Le Clerc*'s  
Equity.

5. 'Tis but natural Justice to Satisfy and Answer another that in earnest complains of an Injury done him. But *Parrhasius* says here, That Mr. *Le Clerc* does not in the least regard that, and *that he thought fit to make no Answer* according to the Equity of Self-love, which thus wittily endeavours to hide its own Weakness. He repeats it below, that he will not enter into the Controversy, nor by that means give occasion to another to make himself known. But, all that's contained in this Centure, either is no Controversy, Con-

Contradiction, or an occasion given to Reply ; but must pass for nothing, for Sugar Plumbs, and for one little Jest ; or Parrhasius, if he be the same with Mr. Le Clerc, has not kept his Word. Whether then the one should be ascribed to his Blindness, and the other to his swerving from the Truth, let himself and others Judge.

6. To call my Thoughts, which I have published in my Books, *Dreams*, as this Author does, and to say that they are *known* to be *such*, when yet he does not prove it, and the contrary is evident, every one cannot but see from what quality of Self-love. Parrhasius says so ; nor have I a Mind upon every occasion to repeat their invidious Names. (6.) *Dreams objected.*

7. Here Parrhasius complains that my Design is to Defame Mr. Le Clerc. But indeed nothing is represented to him but what he published himself to be read by every one, as is evident from the Places and Pages there quoted. Nor is it counted (unless Self-love, according to its own Principles, should please to invert the Names of Things) any Disgrace, to Err in matters of Opinion ; nor can that be called *Defamation*, to confute an Error, published by another, or to represent the same to him ; much less when it is done with a good Design, as I did, to put others upon their Guard against such dangerous Errors ; and to reclaim the mistaken Person himself, if there be any hope of his Recovery. Are things then come to this pass, that none shall dare to take any Notice of the Socinian and Pelagian Notions, which are so industriously spread, but he must be called and looked upon as a *Defamer*, and that indeed by one, who himself exposes and defames the Ancients as well as the Moderns by all the ways of Contempt and Reproach he can possibly invent ? This surely shews the great Blindness and Wickedness of Self love ! (7.) *Of defaming his Friend.*

8. Here Parrhasius owns that Mr. Le Clerc is to blame ; but in what ? namely, for that he acted the part of a Scoffer but slightly (*by one very inconsiderable Jest*) and omitted to do as he ought to have done, viz. to pass a most severe Censure upon what was so disagreeable to his Taste : That is, Parrhasius thinks that Mr. Le Clerc deserves to be blamed, for that he did not enough display the abovesaid Principles of Self love against what contradicts that Love ; that 'tis his Business not only to *Ridicule*, but even to make the most cruel havoc of every thing that comes out (8.) *Of the Obligation he had to pass a more severe Censure.*

out against the same ; (as he has often done and still continues to do upon the most venerable part of Antiquity.) But what it will avail him to usurp and to execute this Office, he does not seem to perceive. He will shew himself to be morose, and a hater of solid Truth and real Good. Then, if it so happen that by his Artifices he seduces some, 'tis true he will lead them very much astray from the Truth, and from what is good ; but yet after all, they will have Reason to be very much displeased with him upon that Account. He will thereby oblige those that are attacked to expose his Errors, and to confirm the Truth the more ; or if they keep silent, it will entitle them to the reward promised to those that suffer Injuries, and upon himself he will draw down the Punishments which God has denounced against the obdurate and the resisters of his Grace ; and he will make his Return and Conversion to God, and to his Light and Grace, so much the more difficult ; which that God may graciously prevent, I sincerely pray.

9. *What Parrhasius means by Religion, and what by Fanaticism, of which he says, That I make the former Ridiculous, and turn it into the other.*

9. In the Preface to the English Edition of the *Divine Oeconomy*, I have shewn more fully what Parrhasius really means by these Words, *To expose Religion to Mockery, and to turn it into Fanaticism.* The matter in short comes to this. RELIGION with Parrhasius is, *Ideas excited in depraved Reason from the Words of Scripture, by the help of Grammar, Criticks and Philosophy, excluding and degrading the Inward Operation of the Spirit of God in our Hearts, and exploding those sacred Mysteries which are repugnant to the taste of corrupt and proud Reason, and to the Blindness, Falsity, and Fantastick Lights of Self-love.* And FANATICISM with him is, *The Asserting the Grace of God working inwardly in us, in the Heart, in the Understanding, in the Faculties of the Mind, and producing in them Faith, Hope, Charity, and solid Vertues, and thereby restoring them to their spiritual Health and Vigour.* We have also said more of Fanaticism in other Places : But because my *Divine Oeconomy* subverts and explodes this Philosophical (or Socinian) Religion, and asserts the Grace of God, as the first Element and Principle of the Christian Religion, this is what Parrhasius (from the Blindness and Malignity of Self-Love) says is, *To expose Religion to Mockery, and to convert it into mere Fanaticism.*



So much for the first onset of the *Pharrhasian* Who Parrhas-  
Censure. In what Follows we shall see him draw *sius Personates*  
out the main Body of his Army, (altho' he says he will *here.*  
not fight) and play all his heavy Artillery upon us.

But why do I liken him to a Soldier, when in truth I know not whom he personates. He does not shew himself to be a Divine and a Christian; for then he would have born with, and even been thankful for such Corrections, as were suited to reclaim Mr. *Le Clerc* from his Errors. He does not behave himself as becomes a Philosopher; for then he would Reason, and to his Words add the Weight of Arguments. Nor does he act like a Critick. For he instances in nothing in particular, whereupon he can ground any Critical Remarks. What then? Let him read these words of his own; and unless that blind Principle of Self-love cast a Cloud before his Eyes, he will there see and detect himself. (a) *The Orators* (or Declaimers) often used to stir up the People against those whom they did not like: Nor yet did they shew any good Reason why they deserved to be hated. It was enough for those (Declaimers) to accuse them of a thousand Falsities, which they were not at all solicitous to prove; which because they pronounced them with Vehemence and Passion, as if they themselves had been fully persuaded of the Truth of what they alledged, They by that means allured the People to be of their side, without offering one solid Reason for the same; which way of acting ought not to be proposed for Imitation, unless one openly declares himself an Enemy of all Good Nature and Equity.

(a) Parrhasiana, p. 121.

10. The Arguments of the Mytticks Parrhasius calls Fooleries from a Principle of Blindness. Now to make this appear, I shall for the Readers better satisfaction, briefly shew, what in reality the Mystical and Allegorical Theology is, and also explain some other Things relating to the same, which Parrhasius so much despises and ridicules.

(10.) He despises Mystical things because of his Blindness.

The whole Substance of the Mystical Writings, or of MYSTIC THEOLOGY, amounts to this, and is included in it: Namely, That we love God with all our Heart, with all our Soul, with all our Mind, and with all our Strength; and that we endeavour also to bring our Neighbours to the same. But seeing that since the Fall of Adam those inward Faculties together with the outward, are vitiated and filled with evil Inclinations, evil Objects, and with Errors and Pollutions of all sorts, which have thrust out the

What Mystical Theology is, and whence it comes.

Love

Rom. 5. 5.  
John 14. 21.  
23.

Love of God, and are inconsistent therewith; 'ti therefore necessary before the Divine Love can return and govern in us, that the abovesaid Faculties be cleansed and purified from all those Impediments; and this indeed at first is done in a more imperfect manner, through the Grace of God afforded us by *Christ*, and the Co-operation of the Faculties themselves; so that the *Understanding* is exercised in the Active Contemplation of God, the *Will* in fervent Prayer, and all the other *Faculties* in Mortification; and afterwards more perfectly and more fully, when the Faculties being become passive, the Operation of God is the sole acting Cause in them, and purifies them thoroughly from all their Pollutions and Infirmities. Hence as soon as the place is fully cleansed and fit to receive the Divine Love, God pours it forth into such a Soul, by the Holy Spirit which is given to it; and *Christ* with the Father comes into it, and so all the most Sacred Trinity dwells there, manifesting itself therein, and governing and bestowing upon that Soul the various Kinds and Degrees of perfect and continual Prayer and Contemplation, and also such foretastes of Life Eternal, such Lights, Joys and other effects of Reciprocal Love and Eternal Delight, as he thinks fit, until it come hereafter to enjoy all Things for ever and in the most perfect manner. And this is briefly the Sum and Subnace of all Mystical Theology.

*The Nature of true Allegorical Theology, and the Origin and first Beginning thereof in Man.*

Farther, seeing the whole Heart, Soul, Mind and Strength of such Persons abound with the Love of God, that is, seeing they are full of God himself, and of Divine, Spiritual and Internal Things, thence it comes, that whatever they think of, whatever they desire, whatever they do, whatever they see in the whole World, whatever they hear, taste, touch or feel, God is always present, they ever think of God, they always meet with, and are ever employed about Things Divine; they always see, feel and taste Heavenly Things, God and the Thing, of God, in all Things. And this is the first and true cause and rise of all solid ALLEGORICAL THEOLOGY, which can never enter into any Minds but such as are in a very high degree Mystical. These then when they read or hear of any External History, or of any Ceremony, or the like, in the Holy Scriptures, they presently discover therein, though more generally, God, Christ and the Holy Spirit, where-

wherewith they are filled, the mighty Wonders of God and the Internal Nature of Souls, which is the Element wherein they wholly Live. If they look upon the Sun, the Clouds and other Meteors; If they view the Earth, the Metals, the Plants, the Flowers, with all their Smells and Beauties; If the Fruits, if Animals; yea, if they see Men themselves and all their Societies and Employments, immediately they think of, they discover, they feel, and they contemplate God, and Things Cœlestial and Spiritual, yea they bring these Things along with them, and implant them into those others.

Now when they are well exercised in these, and are also either prepared or called to more Inward and Secret Things, then, when God thinks fit, they further receive from the Holy Spirit the special Gift of Wisdom and Understanding, whence it comes, that seeing the Father created all Things, without excepting any, by his Word or Son in the Holy Spirit; and seeing the same Father has begun to restore those that are fallen, by his Eternal Word *Jesus Christ* in the Holy Spirit; and seeing he has also spoken to us by his Son in the same Spirit, by illuminating, moving and governing the Patriarchs, Prophets, Evangelists and Apostles, by whom he revealed the Scriptures, and every thing in them relating to the Actions, Government, Revelations, Divine Institutions and Tennets of Holy Men devoted to God; hence, I say, it comes, that by a special Gift of the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding, given to those Friends of God, their Internal Eyes are so opened and illuminated by the Divine Wisdom, that both in the whole Creation of God, and in every Creature, in their Faculties and Vertues, in their Beginning, Progress and Tendency, as I may say, to Perfection, and in the whole Oeconomy relating to them; in all the Scriptures of God also, and in the Histories, Doctrines and Institutions contained in them, they see most evidently and clearly in so far as God pleases, the peculiar Characters, the bright Images, the most distinct and admirable Footsteps, and as I may say, the most profound and indelible Signatures of the Eternal Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and of all their Designs and Procedure in Creating, Redeeming and Restoring, and finally in Glorifying his Creatures; all which open and explain the Nature and Glory of all created Things and of every thing contained in the Scriptures, their Basis, Structure,

*The Origin,  
Nature and  
Principles of  
Theology and  
Theosophic  
Philosophy.*



Structure, and Perfection ; their Roots, Body, Branches, Fruits and Uses, and whatever else relates to them, while the same things remain as *Ænigma's* to others, who yet may be very pious Souls. And from this Gift 'tis that those who are inflamed with Divine Love, and illuminated with the Wisdom thereof, do so magnificently describe the most Divine Things under the cover of Externals and by Emblems, all which seem very obscure, and even absurd to the Ignorant, to the Blind and Impious, (a) *Who have not God in all their Thoughts*, and to the Envious and Scoffers, (b) *Into whose Soul Wisdom shall not enter* ; even as under the Emblem of Conjugal Society *Solomon*, being full of the Spirit of God, in the Song of Songs, of old Described the work of our Redemption ; and as not long since the most sublime Mystlick *Johannes a Cruce* has also done.

Now from these few Instances we may see what those Things are which *Parrhasius* so despises and ridicules, and whether it may not be said to him instead of any other Answer, as the Apostle of old told one, who 'tis true, did not Ridicule, but yet would have profaned the Spirit of God, and his Grace. (c) *Thou hast neither Part nor lot in this matter, for thy Heart is not Right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine Heart may be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the Gall of Bitterness, and in the Bond of Iniquity.*

*Why Parrhasius despises the Persons of the Mysticks, and their ways of acting.*

(d) Psalm 34.  
9.

1 Pet. 2. 3.

But that he also despises the Persons of the Mysticks, and the Reasons of their procedure, the Reason thereof is this. For seeing that they who are thoroughly touched and penetrated with the Light and Love of God, and have tasted, to use a (d) Scripture Expression, *how sweet the Lord is*, can relish nothing but God ; hence it comes that all things else become Insipid and Nauseous to them ; insomuch that they no more long after and desire such Things ; but rather forsake and forget them ; and in this manner they act as well with regard to all worldly Affairs, as to all secular Sciences, Histories, Elegancies, Curiosities, and the like, forasmuch as all these Things are as disagreeable to them as Hay or Dung is to a human Palate. They cannot apply their Minds to such Things, after that they have once tasted the sweetness of the Lord, they cannot spend their time about such barren and insipid Trifles, which in the

sight of God, and in comparison of solid Truth, are mere Bubbles, even vainer and emptier than Vanity itself. Now for this Reason it happens, that they either take no care to be, or are not, for the most part, very Wise and Learned according to the way of the World, or if they were so, they leave off being so, and even very willingly forget all such empty Trifles. Which when other Learned Men (as they think themselves) observe, when they find that those Dainties, which they value so much, are rejected by them, and yet don't see what 'tis that they relish in their Room, they presently conclude that these are Madmen or Fools, or, as they say, *Visionaries*; and indeed they call all that most Divine Business of Eternal Moment, that one Thing necessary, which to them is invisible, *Fooleries* and *Chimera's*, as our *Parrhasius* does here, who in all Human Sciences would fain be taken for a Great Man, forgetting the Words of the Apostle, that \* *The Things of the Spirit of God, and The Wisdom of God*, are in the sight of natural and worldly Wisemen *Foolishness*, when they are really Fools themselves in their vain Wisdom, which in reality, and in the sight of God, is mere Foolishness.

\* 1 Cor. 2.  
14. and 3. 19.

The Foolish Opinion therefore of *Parrhasius* does not in the least hinder but that the true Mystics, who are despised by him, may have true *Wisdom and Learning*, God so wisely Illuminating and Governing their Understanding, which they have entirely yielded up to his Love, so as to enable them rightly to understand, and prudently to order and perform every Thing that he shall think good and necessary for them, as well with regard to Things Internal as External, without suffering them to be employed or distracted about any thing unprofitable or hurtful to them. Which indeed, is true, and solid Wisdom, and Understanding, and such as every Man of a sound Judgment ought highly to esteem and commend.

*Parrhasius's*  
*Opinion of the*  
*Mystics of no*  
*weight. The*  
*contrary true.*

That great Contempt of the Mystical and Allegorical Writers, which *Parrhasius* shews here, and is very common with Mr. *Le Clerc*, is such, that they do not agree together about it. When Mr. *Le Clerc* and *Parrhasius* meet with Mystical and Allegorical Things in the Writings of those that hold the Doctrine of Divine Grace inwardly operating in us, or when they are sought out and shewn in the Holy Scriptures, they look upon them then as *Idle Fancies*, and *Chimera's*; but when they stand in need of some Mystical

*Parrhasius*  
*and Mr. Le*  
*Clerc do not*  
*agree in their*  
*manner of re-*  
*proaching the*  
*Mystics.*

\* *In the Preface to Liberius, de Sancto Amore.*

† *Ibid. p. 281.*

|| *See his Notes upon his French New Testament, Heb. 1. 5. Gal. 4. 24. and many other Places.*

\* *1 Cor. 10, 11.*

† *P. 378.*

or Allegorical Words, either to support the *Socinian* Notions, or to procure Authority to themselves, or to shew their Learning, they fly to them as to Things of the utmost weight and Importance, and such as are full of Force and Wildom, as may appear from the following Instances. *Liberius*, one that's well known to *Parrhasius* and Mr. *Le Clerc*,\* where in one place he imputes the Mystical and Allegorical Interpretations of the Scriptures, by him called *Fooleries*, to a Heathenish Original, namely, to the Study of Rhetoric, yet says, that our delivery from that *Wicked Custom* of seeking Mysteries every where, is owing to the same Heathens. † *By reading the Writings of the Heathens*, says he, ——— we reap the advantage ——— of shaking off that **WICKED CUSTOM** of seeking Mysteries in every Thing, which is a matter of no small Moment. Mr. *Le Clerc* using this great advantage, has indeed in all his Interpretations of the Scriptures, which proceeding from a Spirit of Infinite Wildom, may be thought to contain great Mysteries, taken great Care to obtain from that *Wicked Custom* of seeking Mysteries therein: Yea, whensoever the Sacred Penmen of the *New Testament*, quote any Places out of the *Old*, in a Sense evidently Mystical and Allegorical, he || tells us more than once, that they are not the meanings of those Inspired Writers, but only of the *Jews*, which therefore the Apostles and Evangelists applied to them as Arguments *ad Hominem*, and in order to convince them in their own way of Reasoning, and at their own Weapons, how improper and foolish soever they were in themselves. Nay, in his *French Translation* he has even perverted that Axiom of the Apostle, which confirms those Sentes, \* *All these Things happened to them* (the *Israelites*) *in a Figure* (or Typically;) which he renders thus, *all these Things happened unto them for Ensamples*. But when that *Wicked Custom* of seeking for Mysteries in every Thing, can in any wise contribute to shew his great skill in Profane Learning, he more than once takes it up again as an excellent Custom, and makes a very serious use of it in Interpreting the Writings, and even the ridiculous Fables of the Heathens, so that even in the absurd, obscene, and impious Fables of *Hercules*, *Adonis*, *Ceres*, and the like, he very gravely finds out many Mystical and Allegorical meanings, and often speaks great Things of them in his *Bibliothèque*, in *Moreri*, and even in the † *Parrhasiana* themselves. Yea, and what you will say is very strange, he resumes and makes



makes use of that *Wicked Custom* in his Interpretations of the Scripture, when it can in any wise serve to promote the *Socinian Cause*, as I have shewn in the foregoing Letter, and as *Liberius* himself expressly confesses, saying, || *I have observed innumerable Things that were done before the Gospel, were only shadows of those Things which were to come to pass under the Gospel, and this I have Learned in several Places from the Apostles:* But it almost surpasses all Admiration, that he, in order to establish and support either his own Tenents, or his *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Glosses, which weaken and enervate the Scriptures, should yet reckon himself among the Number of those that have been illuminated by the Holy Spirit, and had extraordinary Gifts and Revelations conferred upon them, or who in supernatural and Mystical Theology, have experienced the sublimest Things, and have even felt the Divine Touches of the other Life. *Liberius* in the Preface to his Epistles, being to give a Reason why his new Discoveries were unknown to the first Reformers, whom he had before Praised, speaks thus: The SPIRIT BLOWS, when, and where it listeth, and also as much as it listeth; and sometimes it hides Things from those (the Reformers) upon whom it vouchsafes a greater Measure of LIGHT, which it REVEALS to others (to *Liberius* and Mr. Le Clerc) who ENJOY the SAME in a lesser Degree only. See here *Liberius* moved with the Spirit, and endued with the Light, Illumination and Revelation of the Spirit; and yet the same Things, and Words in others and in the Mystics, *Parrhasius* and Mr. Le Clerc, brand with the odious Names of Fooleries and Chimera's, and will have it that they are nothing but the airy effects of Fanaticism and Enthusiasm. And in his Preface to his French Translation of the *New Testament*, the same Person says, that in Translating, and Composing his Notes or Glosses, His Mind was filled with such variety of meanings, and they gave him so great inward Pleasure and Satisfaction, that he ought in every Page to thank the Divine Goodness, that before the expectation of that great Day of Rewards (or Retributions) God had vouchsafed to give him a foretaste of them, and enabled him in a lively manner to Contemplate those Benefits, which he will at last bestow upon us (in the other Life.) Indeed, neither the more sublime part of Mystical Theology which is called the *Extraordinary*; nor those that have made the greatest Progress in the same, exhibit, comprehend

|| Epist. Theolog. Liberii. p. 61.

prehend or promise greater Things to their Candidates, than Mr. *Le Clerc* says here that he has experienced and felt. But if Mr. *Le Clerc* in Reality felt any such Thing, he ought, to prevent his being imposed upon by the Enemy, to have Learned from the true Mystics, that Satan, who as the Apostle witnesses, can transform himself into an Angel of Light, can also imitate Divine Sweetnesses, Divine Sensations, and Divine Contemplations, by injecting the Fallacious Appearances of such Things into those, who, tho' they continue in the Element of Corrupt Nature, yet dare thrust themselves into, and treat of Things Divine; and that they may the more boldly and cheerfully weaken and destroy such Things in reality, the crafty Enemy does by those false Appearances very often excite and animate them in the Prosecution of that unhappy Design.

*Why, although they commend the Mystics, they are more inclined to hate them.*

Had *Parrhasius* well considered all these Things when he composed his Anti-mystic Censure, without doubt he would have been a little more cautious, at least not to contradict both himself and Mr. *Le Clerc*, who at other times, and please ye, commend the Mystical Divinity, and esteem themselves as mighty Proficients therein: Altho' it must be acknowledged, they have taken great Care to let it be known, that for the most part they incline to take part against the Mystics, and that in the main they have a very great aversion to that way: The Reason whereof I conceive to be this, namely, because Mystical Theology is not only the very scourge of all vain Studies, which yet they are wholly intent upon; but that 'tis also, if we may speak the Truth, the most specific Antidote against *Socinianism* and *Pelagianism* that possibly can be. For all that Theology is wholly founded upon the Presence of God and his Operations in us, enabling us to put off and totally extinguish Sin, and filling us with the purest Light and Love of God, and revealing and bringing us into the Living Knowledge of the most Holy Trinity, and giving us a foretaste of all the Secrets and Heavenly Blessings thereof, in so far as it shall please God to communicate them to those that Love his Name. So that 'tis utterly impossible for a true Mystic to be a *Pelagian* or *Socinian*, and *vice versa*.

XI. To ob- XI. That *Poiret* would have those Things, which  
trude some  
Things as Oracles what? And who does so?

*Parrhasius*

*Parrhasius* just now noted, looked upon *as so many Oracles*, is what he infers from a Principle of Self-Love only. If Mr. *Poiret* commends some Things, his Custom is to appeal to the Scriptures, and to every ones Conscience examining itself in the sight of God, and he shews, as far as he is able, the Reasons and Causes of whatsoever he proposes, as they very well know who have been at any Pains to consider his Writings. For in this Case *Parrhasius* is (from a Principle of Blindness) guilty of that which he blames in others; for all his Censure, and all the Reproaches that 'tis filled with, are like the Ancient Oracles pronounced after an Enthusiastic way, without giving any Reason or Proof for what he says.

XII. Who cannot but admire the Blindness of a Man that accuses another of *Seducing* well meaning People, who is himself Universally suspected of having a mind to *seduce* and turn away Men from the Knowledge and Sense of Sin, both Original and Actual, and especially of that which is Internal and Spiritual? Of withdrawing and *seducing* them from God and his Spirit, the alone Author and Fountain of all Light, Love and Vertue in us? Of misleading and *seducing* them from acknowledging and adoring the most Holy Trinity and all the Mysteries and Wonders of God? Of hindering and *seducing* them from asking the living and salutary Sense of the Scriptures through the Assistance of God's Holy Spirit? All which indeed make up the Life and Substance of Christianity: When yet he, whom he very Imprudently and falsely accuses of such Practices, does exhort all Men, as far as he can by his Writings, to those Things, that is, to the necessary Requisites and Causes of Salvation, and to Salvation itself, whether Created or Increated. *Parrhasius* moreover may know, that I never persuaded any Body to leave their Party, or any Thing else relating to their External Worship or Condition, and to come over to me; I have rather persuaded many to the contrary: I never kept any Meetings, I teach no Body, nor do I desire to teach: I Write: And I am so much ashamed of what I do Write, that (against *Parrhasius's* Opinion) I publish all to the World. And if in some Things, I have concealed my Name, I will take care even now, by owning them, that no Body shall think I am ashamed of them: But behold whether a Principle of Blindness leads one! *Parrhasius* himself is even ashamed of his Friends first Book.

XII. Of the Shameful Crime of *Seducing* well-meaning People, objected by *Parrhasius*.



\* p. 352.

† Parrh. p.  
160.|| *Vid.* Epist.  
Gal. pro de  
Wayeno con-  
tra Parrhaf.  
p. 34. & 55.

He had \* promised to give an Account of Mr. *Le Clerc's* Books, as being well acquainted with them : He had commended these Words of *Polibius*, as the Rule and Standard of Historical Fidelity ; † *To suppress any matter of Fact in History, is no less a LYE than to mention a Thing that was never done* : And yet immediately in the Chapter of the Catalogue of Mr. *Le Clerc's* Books, he conceals the first and Principal of them all, viz. The Theological Epistles of *Liberius* of Holy Love, tho' he knew very well that by the now dispersed Learned Men of the College of *Saumur*, (where they were Printed and occasioned great disturbances) they were every where both in Conversation and in Print || ascribed to him. He is also ashamed of his Epistles of Inspiration, which he would seem to Father upon one *M. N.* And is it not from a Conscience that he ought to be ashamed of what he does, that he assumes such a variety of borrowed Names, as of *Liberius*, *Parrhasius*, *Phereponus*, and many more which I now pass by ? The same Person is also generally said to propagate *Socinianism*, that is, to exercise the Art of Seducing. He is ashamed to own it ; I wish he was likewise ashamed of doing it.

Finally, If *Parrhasius* by calling those, who agree with me in the same Sentiments, *Simple*, or *well-meaning People*, take that Word in the Evangelical Sense for those, who laying aside all Artifices and Frauds both of their own Hearts, and of their own and others deceitful Reason, surrender themselves simply to God, and to Things Eternal to be instructed by the Spirit and Wisdom of *Christ*, who in them is all Things ; then he plainly shews himself to be a Scoffer ; nor is it matter of Reproach, but rather a Commendation of me, that by what I have published, such *Simple Ones* have been persuaded of the Truth : For such, and no other, *Christ* desires for his Disciples ; to such the Father opens his Heavenly Treasures ; and *Christ* thanks him for revealing them to the *Simple* and to *Babes*, and for hiding them from those that are Wise and Prudent in their own Conceit, as being full of that Proud and swelling Wisdom of their own Reason, which they have acquired by their skill and Industry, and in which they Glory. But, seeing 'tis evident that by this Objection of *Simplicity*, *Parrhasius* would denote, and possibly ridicule too those, who he thinks, as to Parts, Subtilty, Learning and

Wildom,

Wisdom, cannot compare with him or with Mr. *Le Clerc*; he may know, if he pleases, that this can be ascribed to nothing but to his own great Arrogance, by such as well know that many of these he contemns, are not inferior to *Parrhasius* himself either in Sense and good Judgment, or in Solid Erudition, and that possibly they could teach even him many Things, and some of the greatest Moment too, and that also in more kinds of Learning than one; all which such Scoffers as he, and those that admire and are so full of themselves, are yet Ignorant of.

XIII. From that Scoffing Spirit it comes that *Parrhasius* calls what I have published, *Ridiculous* (Notions about Spirituals, or) *Spiritualities*. But the case as to them is such, that they who have read and understood them, the more Learned and the more Pious they have been, the more they have esteemed them, and have even thanked me for what I published, altho' they liv'd at a great distance, and were not before known to me, except perhaps by common Fame. And that *Parrhasius* may not ridicule them also, as if possibly they deserved to be ranked among the *Simple*, I shall take the Liberty, out of many, to name one, whom even Mr. *Le Clerc* will scarce venture to call *Simple*; and that is the Honourable and Learned Mr. *BOYLE*. He, having read a little Book which I published in *French*, entituled the *Theology of the Heart*, \* was so affected with it, and esteemed it so much, that but a little before his Death he caused his Thanks and Good Wishes to be returned me for it. And many others equally Illustrious for Birth, Learning and Virtue, have done the like; but, because they are still alive, I shall not name them. Some of the gravest Divines, yea Professors of Divinity, famous for their Learning and Piety, have been so far from looking upon that Book, which briefly contains the essentials of Mystic Theology, and of every Thing that I have Written, to have nothing in it but *ridiculous Spiritualities*, that they have caused it to be Translated and Printed in the *German* Language, after I had published a Second Edition thereof in *French*. These Things I am forced to mention, that every one may see, and that *Parrhasius* also may see (and be ashamed) by these Examples; how much he deceives others or is deceived himself, when after his Scoffing way he says, *That I seduce the Simple by the ridiculous Spiritualities which I*

XIII. Of  
*Parrhasius's*  
*Charge of Ri-*  
*diculous Spi-*  
*ritualities.*

\* La Theol.  
du Cœur.

publish, and that therefore I ought to be ashamed of what I have done.

*This Accusation obliges me to publish a Catalogue of all the Books that I have Printed.*

*Parrhasius*, or some Body for him, will possibly say, that he did not speak these Things of any one particular Book that I have published; but more generally and indiscriminately of all, of which tho' possibly one or two may not deserve that Censure, yet it holds good as to most of the rest, that the Simple are often seduced by the ridiculous Spiritualities, which they contain. Now to this accusation I can make no other Answer, but by giving a short account of the Names and Contents of all the Books which I have published, that so they that have a mind to judge of this matter, may be able, upon the best Information, to pass a right Judgment upon it. But altho' I am forced and compelled to this by the Injustice of *Parrhasius's* Censure; yet I shall thereby satisfy a great many, that desire to know what I have published: And at the same time shall frustrate *Parrhasius's* Design, which is, by raising and spreading such malicious and confused Calumnies against my Books, to prevail with his Readers not so much as to look into them, because they either oppose or utterly destroy his Errors, or fortify the Readers against them.

*An account of the Author's own Works, Cogitationes Rationales de Deo, &c.*

The first Work that I composed and published, was Printed in the Year 1677, under the Title of *Cogitationes Rationales de Deo, anima & malo*. Which seeing 'tis sufficiently known, there is no occasion for me to say any Thing more particularly of it. Should I say nothing, they that have read that Work will observe, that even then my aim and intention was to do what I could, according to the measure of my Knowledge, not to seduce, but to bring all those that Love to Philosophize, and especially those that were Favourers of the *Cartesian* Philosophy, which I was not unacquainted with, to know, love and worship God after a more perfect manner, and to recommend Peace and Charity among the several contending Parties of Christians. In the Year 1687, I Published a Second Edition of the same Work with many additional Notes and Accessions, keeping the Text of the First Edition intire, and by itself. I know indeed, that this Edition did a little displease some, because in the Preliminary Dissertation I shewed the Weakness and Insufficiency of Reason, and consequently of *Philosophical Religion*, founded in Reason, which sometimes degenerates into mere *Atheism*: Or because in



my Notes I advanced Things quite different from the Opinions of a great many, relating to Predestination and Liberty; but for that very Reason it was the more acceptable to much the greater part of Readers; and it ought to have been so too to the rest, had they not been byas'd some how or other, when they saw the first Edition, which they had approved of before, Reprinted without the least Variation; and when they were at liberty to pass over the Accessions, although I prefer some of them to the Text itself. But seeing both Editions have been now a long time out of Print, I will take care in the Third, which possibly may come out very soon, that the Text of the first shall be also Reprinted without any Alteration, and if I make any Additions or Amendments, they shall be inserted in the Notes and Accessions only.

Next to this I published my *Divine Oeconomy* in French, contained in Six Books, or in Seven small Volumes in Octavo. In that Work my Design was, according to the best of my Knowledge and Ability, to bring not Philosophers only, but all Lovers of true Divinity, and solid Piety, to Love God and their Neighbour, by proposing such Principles as are perfectly agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, to the Nature of Things, and to Peace and true Charity towards the several Sects of Christians, (I mean such as receive and agree in the essential Fundamentals of Salvation.) Which performance gave no small satisfaction to a great many. But because I there shewed that the *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Principles of *Philosophical Religion*, founded in the Faculty of Reason and in Criticks, are inconsistent with the Fundamentals of Christianity, and with the living Principles of the inward Operations of the Spirit of Christ, and of Eternal Salvation; and every where confuted them, and particularly as they are often stated in some Books published by Mr. *Le Clerc*; therefore being mightily incensed against the whole Work, in his *Bibliothèque* he quarrels with it in such a manner, that he either conceals or perverts the Contents thereof, to discourage his Readers, if possible, from looking into it, although such Principles are there to be met with, as easily solve all the Difficulties, concerning the *Origin of Evil*, *Liberty* and the like, about which he and Mr. *Baile* and others have lately raised such a deal of Dust, and which the Atheists boast of as

*The Divine  
Oeconomy.*

inexplicable, as many learned, who have given themselves leave to consider the matter, have very ingeniously acknowledged. Finally, these Six Books of the *Divine Oeconomy*, were also published at *Frankfort*, in *Latin* (*Anno 1705*, in two Volumns in Quarto) and though I did not Translate it my self, yet I read and revised it, and in some places, but very rarely, made some Amendments before it came out, having premised towards the end of the Preface, an Advertisement concerning what particularly relates to it. Many have also wished to have the same work published in the vulgar Tongues, as the *High* and *Low Dutch*, and even in *English*; which had been done long since, had not the largeness of the Work, and the greatness of the Trouble hitherto hindered it.

*The Irenicum.*  
*La Paix de*  
*bonnes ames*  
*dans Tous les*  
*Partis du*  
*Christianisme*

My *Irenicum Universelle*, accommodated to the quieting of good Mens Minds of all the Parties and Perswasions of Christendom, came out also the same Year in *French*, occasioned by the very bitter Censure of a certain Divine, upon a Letter which I had written on that subject, and which a Friend of mine had published. In that Book I did not in the least swerve from my Principal Design of bringing Men over to the Love of God, and to mutual Love and Charity with one another, by the real Practice of the Essentials of Christianity, by conforming themselves, where the Love of God and of their Neighbour requires it, to such things as are merely accessory, and which they may use with a safe Conscience. The Book is now out of Print, but it came out (*Anno 1702.*) in the *German* Language, Translated from the *French*, in which I my self made several Emendations. It is also since Translated into *Latin* by a Friend of mine, and published with several other Tracts in the Second Volumn of *Solid Erudition*; but in that, I altered and corrected many more Things than I did in the *German* Edition, as I have shewn in the proper Place.

*Of Solid Erudition, &c.*

To these I added (*Anno 1692.*) *Three Books de Eruditione Solida, Superficialia & falsa*, which are lately again published more correct and more full, with a Defence of them. These, a little after the first Edition, were Reprinted at *Leipsick*, with a Dissertation by the Famous *Thomasius* prefix'd to them, concerning all the Books that I had then published, wherein that worthy Person shews that he had a very different Opinion of them, from what *Parrhasius* has: But although

though he differ from me in some Philosophical Points, yet the good Things that he has said of me and my Writings are such, That I cannot in Modesty repeat them; unless I may be permitted to say, That they are directly contrary to *Parrhasius's* wicked Suggestion, viz. That I published them with a Design to seduce Mankind; which, surely, whether it be a true or false Censure, I shall leave others, that either have, or will peruse any of my Writings, to Judge.

The little Book of the Education of Children, written by way of Letter, was first published by another, and afterwards by my self, with some Additions. That Book, although it met with some great Adversaries among the Clergy, because it was published in *High Dutch* by a Religious Pastor, and believed to be written by another Person, who were therefore both Prosecuted by them with no small hatred; yet none of my Books found more favourers and approvers every where, who also would not suffer it to continue long in the *French* Tongue only. I have again published it in *Latin*, with several Additions, and have also subjoined my Answers to all the Objections made against it. I shall say nothing more particularly of this neither, unless it be that I would earnestly Desire the Readers to take notice whether or no I have therein practised the Art of seducing the simple (who are chiefly among Children) by *Ridiculous Spiritualities*, as *Parrhasius's* Censure has it.

Of the Education of Children.

In the Book Entituled, *A short Idea of the Pacifick and Mystick Theology, and of the Authors that have treated of the same*, which came out Anno 1702, I acknowledge that the *General Idea of Mystical Theology*, and also the *Letter concerning the Mystical Authors*, are mine. The *Latin* Translation indeed is not mine; But I revised and made some Additions to it, and in the last Edition thereof, viz. in the Second Volumn of *Solid Erudition*, I enlarg'd it yet more. I writ them both in *French*, and they were first published in that Language, at the end of the *German Theology*, of which anon.

Theologia Mystica, ejusque Auctorum Idea brevior.

So much for the Books of which I am the Author my self. As to those that follow, all that's mine is only the Labour of Publishing, and sometimes of Translating them, with several Prefaces, and also some Accessions and Notes, together with the Contents or Arguments of the Chapters.

Other Peoples Books Published by me.



All Antonia  
Bourignon's  
Works.

All Antonia Bourignon's Works in Nineteen Volumes in French, excepting one or two Books that were published before. I contributed nothing to the German and Dutch Editions in Twelve or Fourteen Volumes, nothing to the *English*, into which Language Six of her Books are already Translated, and more are daily expected; nor yet to the *Latin* Translations of one or two of her Books. But though any single Book may be had apart, yet the Bookseller chose rather, for Brevity sake, to reduce them all into so many Volumes. To them I prefix'd an *Apologetical Preface*, and subjoin'd the Continuation of that Virgins Life, to her Death. And to the whole Work I annexed the *Divine Vision* of John Engelbert, of the three Estates, Ecclesiastical, Political and Oeconomical, Translated into French. Soon after these Works appeared together in Nineteen Volumes, some one inserted a most invidious Account of them in the *Acta Eruditorum Lips.* To which I replied by a publick *Advertisement*: \* But seeing that Advertisement was, in my absence, printed with some Alterations, which made my Expressions too sharp and severe; That, as to the Style, I cannot acknowledge for mine. The Author of that Account being thereby exasperated, did indeed write a *Defence thereof*; but to such a Monster of a Defence I thought no other Answer was due except those few Pages which were added to the first Edition of the Books of *Erudition*. And now that the Author of that Defence is dead, and that I am perswaded the Rest of the Collectors of those Acts had no hand therein, I have left those Pages out of the last Edition, not to give any occasion of Offence to any one. Now seeing the scope and substance of Antonia Bourignon's Books is, (as I have observed in my *Irenicum*, and in the Letter concerning the Mystical Writers) to convince Men of their Original corruption deriv'd from Adam, and exceedingly increased by their own actual sins, and to perswade them to renounce that Corruption by dying to the worldly and Diabolical Life of the old Adam through the Power of the Cross of Christ, that being cleans'd and purify'd, they may be made fit Vessels to receive the Holy Spirit promised by Christ, and be by him illuminated, governed, and at last glorified; whether *Parrhasius* will with open Mouth call these Things Ridiculous, and say that they are invented only to seduce Mankind, I do not certainly know: This I know,

\* Monitum  
necessarium  
ad acta Lipsi-  
ens.

know, That not a few have been rescued from the Snares of the World and of the Devil, by reading the Books of this Holy Virgin; and that a great many still will yet be delivered by them.

The Books of the *Imitation of Christ*, Translated by me into *French*, for the use of Protestants, under the Title of *Kempis made common*, were republished Anno 1701, more correct, and were very acceptable to all serious Protestants, some of whom, as I am told, have imitated my Edition in the *German Language*.

Kempis commun.

The two Tomes of the *Theology of the Heart* (of which above) have had two Editions, whereof the last, Anno 1697, is the larger and more correct. 'Tis a Collection of small Tracts; The first Tome contains 1. A small Treatise called, *The enlighened Shepherd*, being a Youth that kept Sheep, who by Purity and Simplicity of Heart, was brought to a wonderful degree of the Love of God, and to a surprising Knowledge of him and his Works. 2. A Treatise of Christian Perfection, said to be written by a *Milaneze Woman*, wherein she shews admirably well the way, how, by denying every thing that is not God, we may arrive at a State of being governed most purely and perfectly by God. 3. Another by the same Person, of the Destruction of Self-love, of which she detects all the lurking Holes, that so by driving it out of them, the Divine Operation and Presence, and the Divine Love may at last find a place in us. The *Second Tome* contains, 4. A Treatise of an unknown Virgin, concerning the Distinction between the sensible Graces or Operations of God, and those that are meerly Spiritual; and also of Eight sorts of Prayer. 5. A Treatise of the Religious *John de S. Samson*, blind from a Child, of raising the Love of God to its highest Degree by the way of Aspirations. 6. An Abridgement of Mystical Theology, by *J. Rigoleuc*, shewing how one may adhere to God by Prayer and Purity of Heart. 7. A Treatise of the Education of Children.

La Theologie du Cœur.

There were afterwards published in *French*, Anno 1691, *Three Dialogues* of *Catharine Adorna Fiescana*, commonly called *Catharine* of Genoa, under the Title of the *Theology of Love*, which for the Method, Order and Contrivance of Divine Wisdom, far exceed all the Human Skill of the Learned, and which breath nothing but the most Ardent, the most Pure, and

La Theologie de l'Amour.

and most Transcendent Love of God. To these is added her *Life*; and I think all of them are such that even the Malice of the Devils themselves cannot say, they deserve to be laughed at, or that the well-meaning can be in any Danger of being seduced by them.

**La Theologie  
de la Croix  
de Jef. Christ.**

*The Theology of the Cross of Jesus Christ*, Translated by me from the *Latin*, into *French*, and published Anno 1696, shew in the Works and Life of that Holy Matron, *Angela de Foligni*, who lived in the Thirteenth Century, how a Soul, that gives itself up to Prayer, and to imitate the Life of *Jesus Christ* by the way of the Cross, may obtain the end of its Creation and Redemption, which is the most pure Love of God, and the solid and certain Knowledge and Enjoyment of the Truth; and how also it may attain to many fore-tastes of God and of Things Divine, which the infinite Wisdom of God, dispenseth as he thinks fit, to those that Love him. I also Translated into *French*, and added to this the Fourteen Exercises of the most pious *Blossius* upon the Passion of *Christ*. All which seeing they most powerfully set forth the solid Substance of the Gospel, and conduce to bring all Men to their chief and supremum End, none will say that they contain Things Ridiculous, or that they tend to seduce Men, without being guilty of the same Malicious and Blasphemous accusation against the Gospel of *Christ* it self.

**La Theologie  
reelle ou Ger-  
manique.**

*The real (or German) Theology*, which I Translated out of *High Dutch* into *French*, together with two small Treatises, one concerning the *Restoration*, and the other the *Regeneration* of Man, both in *Low Dutch*, and by me also Translated into *French*, to which I also annexed some *Spiritual* and *Mystical* Aphorisms collected from the Works of *P. John de S. Samson*, came out in the Year 1700. To this there is prefixed a Preface divided into four Parts, and is longer than the *German Theology* itself; the first Part Treats of Things relating to the Books themselves; the next contains a shorter and clearer Idea of the *Mystical Theology*, and is evidently proved even by the Suffrage of Human Reason. This part was mentioned above. The third contains an Apology for *Mystical Divinity* against an *Historical Treatise*, written in *French*, containing the Opinion of a Protestant Divine about *Mystical Theology*; The chief Foundati-  
ons

**Traité Histo-  
rique conte-  
nant le Juge-  
ment d'un  
Protestant,  
&c.**



ons and Contents whereof are there overthrown and Refuted. In the fourth, the Grounds of a certain French Book, written by an Anonymous Abbot, against the same Theology, are also destroy'd. To the whole Work, *The Letter concerning the Mysticks*, but lately mentioned, with the Catalogue, is subjoyned. The Approbations of the *German Theology*, which I have inserted in the Preface, both from many Eminent Roman Catholicks and Protestants, do sufficiently vindicate that Book from the Calumny of being *Ridiculous*, or of tending to seduce Men into Errors: And as to *Mystical Theology*, What we have observed \* above, with Relation to the Nature \* N<sup>o</sup> 10. and Design thereof, does the same thing.

In the Year 1701, there was Reprinted with a new Preface, under the Title of *The real Christian*, in two Tomes in French, 1. *The Life of the Marquess de Renty*; which had been often published in France, but was then grown scarce; and if Parrhasius reckons this among *Deceitful and Seducing Fooleries*, all those that fear God, and even some of his own Friends will be against him: For although that most illustrious Person was in his Heart and Actions truly a Mystic, yea, and a Roman Catholick; yet nevertheless, such is the Power of Truth, that it extorted from Dr. Burnet, now Bishop of Salisbury, to whom Mr. Le Clerc dedicates some of his Works, this (a) Testimony, *That that Life had nothing that looks fabulous in it; and that it contains so many illustrious instances of Vertue, that he that Practised them ought justly to be looked upon as one of the greatest examples that France has in this Age produced.* (a) In his Preface to the *Life of Matthew Hale*. 2. In the Second Tome, is the Life of a certain Religious Lady, a Disciple of Mr. de Renty, in whom the same most admirable and solid Vertues and Graces did shine as in him. Mrs. Bourignon used always to carry along with her a little Book, because she greatly esteemed it, wherein most of our Saviour's Words were written, and to which some *Exclamations upon the Life of Grace*, were annexed: These I got Transcribed out of that Book, which I have by me, and added them to the end of this Second Volumn.

Much about this time, a certain Friend of mine of singular Learning and Piety, sent me a little History of the Life and Death of a certain pious Youth, who was one of those that fled from France upon the Account of his Religion, which History he writ

Le Saint  
Refugie.

writ upon his own Knowledge : This I published under the title of the *Religious Refugee ; or the exemplary Life and Death of Wernerus*. In which, besides many powerful Examples and Motives to persuade us to enter upon a truly Christian Life, and to deny our selves, there is nothing that's *Ridiculous*, or that tends to *seduce* any one.

Catechisme  
Chrétien  
pour la vie  
interieure.

*The Christian Catechism for the Internal Life*, written in French by Mr. Olier, when it was grown so Scarce, that 'twas not to be found, I gave the Copy which I had to be Reprinted, Anno 1703, and to the same I added some *Exclamations* concerning the *Life of Grace*, which are very suitable to that Subject. This Catechism, having first shewn in a most lively manner the Immense Wickedness and Impotence of our Corruption, does so clearly set before us the absolute necessity of the *Grace of God*, and that most excellent state of the Christian Life, which is illuminated with the Divine Grace, that very few or none have done the like in so few Words, so effectually, and in Expressions which occur almost every where in the Holy Scriptures themselves.

L'Ecole du  
pur Amour de  
Dieu, &c.

Having afterwards procured the wonderful Life of a Poor, illiterate Country Maid, exceeding all that we can imagine of the Christian and Mystical Theory and Practice, I gave it with a Preface prefixed to it, to be reprinted with this Title, *The School of the Pure Love of God, opened to the Learned as well as the Unlearned, in the admirable Life of a Poor illiterate Servant Maid, named ARMELLE NICOLAS, lately Deceased in Britanny : Written by a Friend of hers, devoted to God, Anno, 1704*. In this Life, the wonderful Solidity, and Sublimeness of the Things she treats of, whether Christian, Spiritual or Divine, both Speculative and Practical, seem to vye with one another, which shall have the Preference : I confess I have never seen any Thing of the kind like it : So that I was infinitely surprized, when I was told, and afterwards read the short account which the Author of the French Tracts entituled, \* *The History of the Works of the Learned*, gives of this most Divine Life : In that account he has purposely suppressed the more solid and useful, and picked out all the most accessary, external and insignificant Things he could light on, and which he thought People would either condemn or laugh at, especially wherein they relate to the Externals peculiar to the Roman-Catholics, and which

\* Histoire  
des Ouvrages  
des Savant.  
Avril, Mai,  
Juin, 1703.

which he often Comments upon very ridiculously. I cannot but wonder that in this he would imitate the method of Profane Wranglers, and that he did not consider, that by the same manner, not only the Divine Writings of *De Renty*, *Kempis*, *St. Bernard*, but even the Holy Scriptures themselves, as I have \* else. \* In my Letter of the Mystics. §. 28. where observed, may be maliciously exposed to the Laughter and Ridicule of Impious Men. He is also mistaken and imposes upon his Readers in endeavouring to persuade them that what I have said either in this Work, or in any other of those that I have mentioned, relating to the Worship or Opinions of the *Roman Catholics*, is by me published, defended and so favourably represented, with a design to tempt Protestants to desert their side, and to come over to the other; this is what never entered into my Mind, yea, 'tis directly contrary to my Opinion, which is only this, that Men, of whatever Party or Persuasion they be, should not hate one another upon the account of some Externals, nor despise such Things in others as are sometimes most Solid and Divine, nor reject them upon the account of some Accessories of little moment, which tho' they may be called Errors, are yet very consistent with the Love of God, and with his special Grace and Gifts. In a Word, it has always been my Opinion, and still is, that every one, without changing sides, should accustom himself to see and acknowledge the Operations and Power of the Spirit of *Christ* in others, tho' at the same time, as to Ceremonies and some particular Opinions they may behold some Imperfections in them: This, I say, we ought to do, to the end that, agreeing, living and growing up together in Christian Love and Charity, so highly commended by *Christ*, we may be made fit to receive a fuller measure of the promised Spirit of Love and Truth, and thereby be made one with *Christ* and the Father in the Holy Spirit, according to the Prayer of *Christ* himself for us; and that thereby the World may know that *CHRIST* is sent by the Father, the true Saviour, to save his own, by the Communication of his Holy Spirit, from their Sins, and to deliver them from Diabolical Hatred, introduced by *Cain* and *Satan* upon the account of External Worship; and that he may restore us all into the perfect bond of Eternal Union with God, which is Charity and Life Eternal.



*The Spiritual  
Tracts of M.  
Guion.*

The same Year having had sent me from abroad a Manuscript of the most Celebrated Madam Guion, never Printed before, which to me seemed to be of great worth, Importance, and a Key to all her Writings, I determined not only to publish that, but also to get the other little Treatises of that Author, which were abroad in the World before, to be reprinted together. Here I ought to take notice, that in the first Edition of her two Tracts Published in *Holland*, 1699, I did nothing but only advised and encouraged the Printing of them: And this I do, because I have been informed that some who, according as they deserve, highly esteem those Tracts, have taken it ill, that in the Preface to the First Edition, altho' he that writ it does for the most part speak well of every Thing, yet that he seems to express some Things not only coldly, but even with an Ironical Air. This Preface then is not mine; but only that prefixed to the Second Edition in *French*, with this Title, \* *The Spiritual Tracts of Madam J. M. B. de la Mothe Guion, enlarged with a Treatise of hers never before Published, called the TORRENTS, with a General Preface concerning the Author's Person and Doctrine, and the Persecutions raised against her.* Those Tracts are, 1. *A short and easy Method of Prayer*; which indeed has given such general Satisfaction, that it is already Published in *High and Low Dutch*, and in *Latin and English*. 2. That rare and truly profound and incomparable Treatise, that real and lasting Monument of Divine Wisdom, *the Torrents*, wherein under the Emblem of Torrents of Water are described the admirable ways of Faith, whereby those Souls are Purified, who are here united to God, and whom he thinks fit to chuse out to be the great Instruments of his Hand in this World. 3. The most sublime, and most solid *Interpretation of the Canticles of Solomon*, as it is truly referable to those Souls: And then 4. the next Year, a Tract of hers in *French*, † entitled, *a Rule for the Associates of the Infancy of Jesus, the Model of Perfection for all States, &c.* Which was but lately transmitted to me from *England*.

† *Regle des  
Associés à  
l'Enfance de  
Jesus, &c.*

‖ *Christianarum virtutum  
Insinuatio fa-  
cilis.* ‖ *an easy Insinuation of the Christian Vertues, accommodat-  
ed to all Capacities*, which was put into my Hands by a Learned and Pious Friend for that end; the Title briefly hints at the Subject it treats of; but my Preface prefixed to it shews it more at large.

I have moreover in my Hands a Treatise written *Faith and* by another Anonymous Friend, not only *Illustrious Reason* com- for his Learning and Piety, but also for his many o- *pared.* ther singular good Qualities; it treats of *Faith and Reason*, with some Accessions concerning *Perfection and Felicity*, wherein Mr. Lock's pernicious Principles (which Mr. Le Clerc has also adopted as his own) which prostitute Divine Faith to be trampled upon by profane Reason, are utterly overthrown: But seeing that Treatise is not yet \* published, (tho' very \* *This was* speedily designed for the Press) I cannot yet appeal *since Printed* to that as I have done to the rest, whether *Parrhasius* in Latin, and does justly or unjustly say, that *all that I have Published is but very* (of my own or others) *is nothing but ridiculous Spiritu- lately Trans-* alities, and that I ought to be ashamed of endea- *lated and Pub-* vouring so much to seduce People with them: Whe- *lished in Eng-* ther this be so or not, any one that will take the *lish.* trouble, may better inform himself from the above- mention'd Books, if he will but look into them, than our *Parrhasius* or *Le Clerc*, who against all his own Rules of Critics, pretends to Censure such Things as he never read, or which possibly in the main he never looked into. Such is the Serpentine Disposition of our Corrupt Nature, or of *Pelagianism*, that 'tis afraid, should it listen to the Words of Divine Truth, of being Incharmed with them; and therefore it purposely turns its Ears away from them, even as they do of whom the Royal Prophet speaks.

† *Lingua venenum pestifera gerunt,*  
*Auresque claudunt Consiliis, velut*  
*Obturat Aures callida aspis.*  
*Que Magicos metuit Susurros.*

† Psal. 58.  
 4, 5.

XIV. *Parrhasius* from the Principles of Self-Love above- mentioned, in this his Censure, calls those divine Whispers *fus* *by object-* (*Susurros*) *Fanatical* ways of Speaking *apt to Deceive.* Should *ing Fanatical* one ask him, what those *Fanatical* ways are, or what he *ways of Speak-* means by those Words; the Question would not a little gra- *ing, does not* ve him. I will then answer it for him, & that more truly. *know what he*

A Word, or Speech, is the Index of the Mind, yea *says.* 'tis the Image thereof. Speak that I may know thee, *The origine of* said one: And Christ, *How can ye, being Evil, speak the Modes of* Good Things? For out of the abundance of the Heart, the Speech, where- *Mouth Speaketh.* || He that simply conceives in his Mind of Three are certain Objects, does not therefore express them in Words: *the chief, and* For in order to this 'tis necessary that he conceive (or *the Reasons* think of) them with Affection; and not only so neither, *thereof.* but that others also may conceive them, and receive || *Matt. 12.* them with Affection, and that they be still more and 34.

more propagated from one to another. Speech therefore, especially when 'tis Dogmatical and comes from a sound and serious Mind, infers and denotes Three Things, viz. The Conception of the Object in the Mind, Affection towards the same, and the Desire of Propagating it. But the Object when 'tis Great, the best, and the most valuable, when 'tis Stable, Internal, Spiritual and Divine; when moreover the Affection of the Mind is strongly, sincerely and deeply touched and penetrated therewith, and that even to the Spirit, and after a Divine Manner: When, finally, these Things being seen and approved of by God the searcher of Hearts, are assisted, so that the Mind thus affected, and big to bring forth Things by Words, is Influenced and Watered by God and his Graces, and in Elocution Experiences the Assistance of God; then in such a Case, *The ways of Speaking* cannot but carry in them something great and excellent, they cannot but Eccho out something Magnificent, they cannot but savour of something that's very inward, lively, sincere, divine, and altogether Incomparable; but when the Object is earthly, transitory, fading, corrupt, trifling, and for an immortal Man of little or no Moment; then indeed, seeing 'tis but reasonable that our Conceptions and Affections should be taken up with them either very little or not at all; It may likewise be reasonably expected that we should either say nothing of them, or speak but very sparingly of them, and that in terms importing but very little Esteem. But, seeing Man is at present wholly corrupt, and seeing his Understanding and his Heart and Affections are turned away from Divine Objects, and from loving them, hence it comes, that instead of conceiving and thinking of great Objects he is taken up with vain, foolish, fading Trifles, and even with nothing at all; and instead of Objects which he ought to Love and cherish in his Affections, he not only takes up with such slight and wholly inconsiderable Matters (which cannot long satisfy him) but is chiefly delighted with himself, whom out of Self-love he greatly covets to adorn, and magnify, and to have himself highly esteemed by others, not indeed by directly shewing or exposing those his shameful Affections, but by shewing how excellently well he is skilled in the Ideas, Conceptions and Knowledge of those trifling Things, which he uses all his Art to express and paint out in Words accommodated to the



the corrupt Taste, and to gratify the Ears of others. At which indeed other blind Men, who are not at all acquainted with more sublime Objects, may be, and often are astonished, so that they highly esteem the wretched Idol of such a silly Man (according to his first Intention) wondering how such an infinite variety of such mighty Trifles and Impertinencies (which out of blindness they look upon as Treasures) could be so well lodged and so orderly disposed within the narrow compass of one Man's Brain; and how he could so handsomely cloath them with Words, and thereby expose them frequently and at large to publick Sale.

We have therefor Three sorts of Speakers, who use Three sorts of Speech; although they may be all reduced to Two.

*Three sorts of Speakers; which are reduced to Two.*

The first speak of Things Eternal, Divine, Solid, and Inward; and of such Things as relate to them; and this they do in a simple, sincere, lively and Divine manner.

The second sort speak of Things External, Perishable and Fading, and which of themselves are nothing; and this they do either sparingly, slowly and contemptuously, or they say nothing of them at all: Now these two are truly in one and the same Mind, which only considers the variety of the two Objects.

The third sort do also speak of the same External and Transitory Things; but they do it after various ways, which are more or less affected, and which are painted and disposed after an infinite Number of ways, to raise our Esteem, and according as they think they can find their own Interest, or advance their Reputation by them.

But it must be observed, that as to the Objects conceived, the Affections and Modes of Speech, the first and last of these are directly opposite to one another; for the first extolling solid Things only, speak of every thing relating to the latter as vain and unworthy of an immortal Soul. Yea, they look upon them as the Snares and Bands of Satan, where-with that Enemy of Souls endeavours to bind and hinder them from Aspiring after Heavenly Objects, for which they were made; and what these say, they do it in a moving and penetrating way, and are supported with good and solid Arguments drawn from the Scriptures and sound Reason. On the other side, the Praters of the third Class, when they see

*The true Reason why Parrhasius calls the Mystical ways of speaking Fanatical.*

all their Wares either torn to Pieces or despised by them, and being thereby greatly offended with them, and not finding in the Scriptures or in sound Reason any Argument or Shelter either for themselves or against them, they are forced to betake themselves to the Armory of Self-love, to Dissimulations and Frauds, and to loose Declamations and Rhetorical Flourishes, wherewith to Colour and Disguise all those sinistrous Artifices that they find themselves obliged to use against them.

And this is the Genuin Reason why *Parrhasius* (as belonging to this third Class) without giving any Reason, rails so as he does against the Mysticks (who are of the first and second Class) and against their ways of speaking, all which he Traduces as *Fanatical*: That is, he considers them as ways whereby Things Divine, Eternal and Inward are solidly, lively, sincerely and efficaciously proposed; otherwise than he and such as himself do with regard to their own silly trifling Fancies, or their Imaginary Notions in Divinity, which by the help of corrupt Reason and Criticks they Extract from the Letter of the Scripture, and which after all, are nothing but Dry, Barren and Airy Speculations; and such as have no other Reality nor Existence, but what they have in their own Corrupt Imaginations.

XV. *Why Parrhasius Accuses those that are pleased with Mystical things, of seeking to impose upon themselves.*

XV. Again. These two sorts of speakers have each their respective Auditors, who favour and are pleas'd with them; and who are also contrary one to the other.

The first, when they see that some upon hearing their words, are converted to God and to heavenly Things, and condemn every thing else, they ascribe the Glory thereof not to themselves, but to God, and they own that their Conversion is from God, that they are touched by God (to whom they desire to offer up their Faculties to receive his Operations) and that they are therefore the Sons of God, whilst others who are affected and wrought upon by trifles and empty Words are of the World, and continue so. (a) *They are of the World, therefore speak they of the World, and the World heareth them. We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby know we the Spirit of Truth, and the Spirit of Error, or DELUSION.*

(a) 1 Jo. 4. 5.

On the other hand, the last, who are full of Self-love, esteem themselves and their Followers only, so that all the Glory of their Acquirements may be ascribed to themselves, to their own Industry, Penetration and Ingenuity; therefore they use to reckon only themselves and their Followers among the learned Men, and among the great, amazing and celestial Genius's of their Age: But if they see some others, who possibly were once either their Hearers or Companions, go over to the first, leaving and despising those amusing trifles which they formerly so much loved, yet because of their blindness they do not see the Cause of this change, *viz.* Those more Divine Objects of the Soul, and their inward Affections and Operations, which draw and attract the Mind to them, they cannot chuse but be astonished at such an Incident, they must despise the unknown Cause thereof, and ascribe it to a certain *Simplicity* of Mind, and say, That it proceeds from a facility or *Propension* of the Soul to *deceive itself*; just as *Parrhasius* does here in our Case, when he says, That those that suffer themselves to be led by Divine Mystical Authors to those Things which to him are Invisible, are therefore deceived by the fanatical ways or Terms of the Mysticks, because they are very forward and apt to deceive themselves; that is, because they are very willing to suffer themselves to be drawn and influenced by the efficacious Operations of a Diviner sort of Objects, which to *Parrhasius*, who is so blind that he can neither see nor understand them, seem to be nothing but *Delusion* or *Deception*. But this *Parrhasius* abhors; for to one that is guided by Self-love, it seems absurd to surrender and resign himself to those Objects, Words or Promises, which his blind Reason cannot first comprehend. In such a case he would willingly deceive himself, says he! But good Mr. *Parrhasius*, did you never see any Blind Men put themselves into the Hands of an Operator or Oculist, and submit to his Operations and Methods of Cure, although they never saw him, and that yet for all that they did not deceive themselves, but acted very wisely? Or did you never read in the Scriptures (a) That he that would be wise in Christ, must look upon all Self-love, or the Wisdom of the Flesh, as foolishness; yea, that he ought to be crucify'd and die to it; and that though it was gain before, yet that it ought to be cast away like Dung, that we may be

(a) 1 Cor. 1,  
30. & 3. 18.  
Philip 3. 8,  
&c.



*found in Christ, and know him and the Power of his Death and Resurrection, and that he may be made to us that Wisdom which can never deceive us?*

**XVI. Why Parrhasius ascribes to his Adversaries empty Imaginations for Religion?**

XVI. Finally, *Parrhasius* observing well enough, that those who are affected with and addicted to Things solid and spiritual, are not therefore stupid; but that their Mind, Understanding, Heart and Affections are really exercised and taken up in a very lively manner; but not seeing or not knowing that God is intimately present in them, working in and filling the Soul and all its Faculties with the Operations of his Love; hence he dares not indeed ascribe to them (as some have done out of Derision and by reason of their Ignorance in the Mystical Theology) a State of *Quietism* or *simple Rest*, and an absolute Privation of all Thought. Our Antagonist acknowledges that they think and conceive, and Exercise other Acts of the Mind; but according to his scoffing way, he calls them *Imaginations*, and these indeed *Empty*, or vain; namely, because he is wholly Ignorant of the Transcendent Reality both of the Object that fills them, and of the Internal, Spiritual and Invisible Acts of the Mind itself. And because the Mysticks esteem and recommend this inward Occupation of the Faculties of the Mind with God, and with his Operations and Love, given and kindled therein by the Holy Spirit, as the Essence and Life of True RELIGION, and as that great Commandment upon which the Law and the Prophets hang; and seeing that Occupation or Employment of the Mind and its Faculties with God working in them, is as has been said by *Parrhasius*, ranked among vain and *Empty Imaginations*; hence it comes that he adds, that those who listen to the Mysticks, *Take up with empty Imaginations* for RELIGION.

**XVII. Religion as defined or commended by Parrhasius, how much it may deceive?**

XVII. That we may not, after having exploded those things, remain altogether without Religion; he is very ambitious to shew us forthwith what RELIGION is, viz. *Good Manners grounded upon the Hopes of another Life proposed in the Gospel*. It would be a Malicious slander, did *Parrhasius* (which I do not charge upon him) thereby intend to insinuate, that those of whom he speaks, esteemed Good Manners less than they ought: For although Manners seem to appertain more to the Externals than to the Internals of Christianity, yet because we ought to glorify God in Body and before Men, that thereby they may be

be moved to turn unto God, the Christian Religion cannot be perfect without them, and indeed *Good Manners* are of great value when they proceed from a Heart (as the Mysticks with the Scriptures teach) thirsting after God, and which is sincere and humble, and that always implores the Assistance, Strength and Wisdom of the Holy Spirit, which Desires to please God only, and proposes to itself the Glory of God alone in all Things, that so God may be glorified through us, and through others, now and for ever. But when they proceed from Self-love, which seeks only its own Praise, its own Pleasure, and its own Advantage; and from a Heart which is Proud and that trusts in itself, rejecting or deriding the inward Assistances, Light, Motion, and Government of God; then such *Good Manners*, though in a Political Sense, and according to the Rules of Honesty, they be very good, yet in the sight of God they are nothing but an Abomination; just like the *Good Manners* of the Pharisees, who gave God Thanks, that they were not (a) as other (a) Luke 18. Men, Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers; That they fasted 10, &c. often, and gave Tithes of all that they had, and made long Prayers; when yet Christ affirms that by this Righteousness (b) none shall enter into the Kingdom (b) Mat. 5. of Heaven; that although they believe themselves 20. to be Righteous, and behave themselves civilly before Men, yet that (c) God knows their Hearts, and (c) Luke 16. abominates those things that Men esteem; and hence it 15. is that (d) comparing them to whited Sepulchres, he denounces many grievous Woes against them. But according to Parrhasius's Maxim and Religion, they (d) Mat. 23. ought rather to have been praised and thought 27, &c. happy, forasmuch as they had *Good Manners* founded in the hopes of another Life proposed in the Psalms and other Books of the Old Testament. Who does not see that under these Words, Parrhasius, who in all his other Writings (e) does so much cry up the Socinian (e) Bibl. Probity and Sanctity, would either conceal or introduce the Pelagian Religion, which is proud and tainted 5. P. 311. with the Poyson of Self-love, and which glories in rejecting the most inward Operations of God? But how can true Sanctity dwell in a Heart, from whence the Author of Holiness, the Holy Spirit of God is banished, and which is so proud that it scoffs at all the Operations thereof, and which will nether acknowledge its own Impurity and Impotence, nor hum-

bly desire to be touched by the healing hand of God in its most Inward Parts? What also can *that other life* be to a corrupt Man, who scoffs at all Inward or Mystical Things, but every thing that's grateful and pleasant to corrupt Nature; having withal a due regard to Honesty, so that from this absurd Principle, some have almost fancied to themselves that the Life of God and of the Heavenly Host, may possibly be employed in Mathematical Contemplations, unless possibly some *Parrhasian* Criticks should rather imagine that it is taken up in publishing the *Classick Authors* with curious Notes, or in some other thing very grateful and acceptable to Men of a Critical Taste; or perchance in those Songs and Dances which Mr. *Le Clerc* has placed at one side of that lucid Globe, which in his Notes upon the New Testament he sometimes substitutes (Symbolically, as he says) for the Presence of God, and at whose (a) *Right hand* he imagines that *Christ* sits in Heaven, not knowing that in the other Life, things will not be communicated to us in *Ænigma's*, but in Truth and in Reality, so that the Spirits of Just and Holy Men shall be consummated in one (b) with God, and in God himself even after that most intimate way of Union whereby the Son of God is one in and with God the Father.

(a) Vid. Not.  
ad Mark 16.  
9. also Mat.  
13. 16. and  
5. 9. John  
14. 8.

(b) Vid. John  
17.

The Scope of  
true Religion,  
and what it  
requires?

(c) 1 Cor. 15.  
28.

Now to this Life Eternal, namely a full and most intimate Union with God, we must be led and prepared by the *CHRISTIAN RELIGION*, whereby all such things as obstruct that most intimate Union in and with God, and which are the hindrances that God is not to us (c) *all in all*, must be removed; and from which likewise we must learn how and by what means we may again put ourselves into the Hands of our Creator.

But what have separated us from that Union with God, and are still hindrances to it, are Pride of Heart, and every thing that helps to cherish the same, such as our own Wisdom, our own Ratiocinations, our own Conduct, and the setting our Hearts upon Objects which are not God; our glorying in Wisdom and in the Knowledge of many Things whence we seem to be like Gods, knowing by our own Industry the difference between Good and Evil; and finally the desire and delight of Nature in Plenty of External Things, and the sweet satisfaction we take in them. But in order to promote that Divine Union,



on, we must put away and hate all these Things, and we must turn our Hearts, and all our most inward Faculties with all possible sincerity and simplicity to the Will of God alone, whereupon the healing, perfecting and uniting Operation of God will ensue.

Now that the Omnipotent God might powerfully and admirably accomplish all these Things, by removing some and promoting others; and being willing to apply the most powerful means that was possible, even that by which we were Created, he out of the infinite Abyss of his Love and Wisdom wrought and brought to Light that most stupendous Miracle, which even the Angels themselves can never sufficiently adore, the Mystery of Godliness, the Life and Power of the CHRISTIAN RELIGION; namely, the WORD of GOD, *by which all things were made, which is from the beginning with God, which is God, the only begotten Son who is in the Bosom of the Father*, Omnipotent, Infinite, Eternal and for ever Blessed, was MADE FLESH; who hiding his Eternal Glory from us, *strip'd himself of all things and humbled himself*, being made Man, the humblest of Men, and becoming a little Infant, unable either to speak or to govern himself, and committed to the Government of the Divine Wisdom which dwelt in a poor Virgin and a Carpenter; and who lived in the greatest simplicity, in denying himself, and in all sorts of Wants of worldly Wisdom, of Plenty and of Pleasures; in Contempt, in Pains of Soul and Body, in which after he would Die and be buried; arising from thence by the Power of God, he returned to a glorious Union and Life Eternal with the Father, and from him obtained and sent the Holy Spirit, that in the Power and by the Conduct thereof we also may return to the Father by that self-same way which the Son trod in before us, and has recommended to us, saying, *I am the Way, the Truth and the Life; no Man comes or returns to the Father but by me*; That is, none is fit and worthy to be reunited to God, unless laying aside *all Malice and all Guile, all Pride, all Self-wisdom and vain Reasoning, all Self-love and every Lust of Corrupt Nature*, he be born again in the Childlike Spirit of Christ, unless every one give up and resign himself to the Spirit of Christ our God, that he may be *Incarnate* again, as I may say, after a secondary but living and

*A Summary Account of our most DIVINE RELIGION as opposed to the Parrhasian Religion.*

John 1.

Philip. 2. 7.

John 14. 6.

1 Pet. 2. 1, 2.

Gal. 4. 19.

and real manner, in us, that *be may be formed in us*, that he may take to himself our Mind, our Faculties and all that's ours, and do and work in them (in every one according to his Capacity) all that he did and wrought in the Humanity of Christ himself: So that we may be made by him and in him *as new born Babes*, knowing nothing but to *desire* and seek continually from the Wisdom of God, *That sincere Milk of the WORD* (the quickening Power and Strength of God in Spirit and in Truth) whereby *ὁ λόγος ἐν ἡμῖν*, *The Word made Flesh*, was nourished, *That by it* we may grow in the same word Incarnate, partaking of his Life and Spirit of most humble Examination, Simplicity, Afflictions, Infamy, Death, Burial, Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven, where finally our Heart and Conversation is with him, and from whence by the same Holy Spirit ruling then in us without any let or molestation, and working more fully all good Things in us, do thenceforward proceed all our Understanding and Knowledge, and Ability, and Government, and finally all our words tending to the Glory of the Father through Christ in the same Spirit, even until that Omnipotent Power swallow up all the remains of our Mortality into Eternal Glory. This, this is that true and most heavenly CHRISTIAN RELIGION, so much commended in the Holy Scriptures, and by those Mystical Authors whom *Parrhasius* despises; and this alone is enough to shame the miserable Pride of Man's Heart, his Mad Wisdom, and the foolish Confidence of Human Reason, glorying in its own impotent Industry, Activity and Operations, whereby, being horribly imposed upon by Satan, they imagine and persuade themselves that they can *return to the Father*, to Life Eternal, and to the highest Perfection, by Study, Reasoning, Philosophy, Critick, and gathering together infinite heaps and Mountains of Ideas concerning God and Things Divine, concerning the Works of Nature and Grace, concerning the Actions and Exploits of Men, and finally concerning an infinite number of insignificant matters, as long as they have and are governed by that sort of *Good Manners* which arises from the Rules of Philosophy and common honesty, whereby their Pride and Self-love are indeed more and more nourished and supported: When yet they might have learned from the Holy Scriptures, and ought to think

think deeply of it, that these are the very Things which God hates, and that abominable Idol, which the Christian Religion undertook to Destroy, and for which, that no Flesh might Glory in itself, but that the Divine Majesty might be Glorified and Praised in and by all Things, it pleased God, as we have just now mentioned, to appoint that Religion, the only way of returning to the Father, to Life and to Eternal Perfection; which is JESUS CHRIST strip'd of every thing, abased, a Infant not using his own Reason, his own Will, not Governing, or seeking himself or his own Glory, Contemned, Patient, Dying, Rising again, and Living and Dwelling in Heaven, without whose Spirit and without participating of his several States by Faith, or by surrendring our passive Faculties to God, to be incarnated, to live, to operate and to rule in us, there is no true Religion, nor any access to God; but all are in Error and in the way of Death, and belong and go to Satan with all their Speculations, Amusements, false Sciences, Ideas, Subtilties, and Imaginary Perswasions relating to the other hoped for Life, and with all the *Good Manners* and superficial Vertues of their Philosophical and Rational Religion; all which without that Fund of the most Divine Christian Religion, or without striving after it in a true and lively manner, nay without having already partook thereof by Faith, are at best but cold and barren Images of Vertues, craftily and induttriously, often absurdly, and always without any Life, painted in the Imagination by the Superficial Faculty of Human Reason, and which consequently have no Power to make us (a) *Followers of God as Dear Children*; and to imitate Christ in this World, that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment; and which have no Power to raise us above corrupt Nature, nor to produce any living Acts in the time of Temptation whereby to destroy the Assaults of evil Affections, and to suppress and eradicate the Dark, false and Malicious Principles of Self-love. This is what *Parrhasius*, or he that assumes that Name, may very plainly observe in himself, who talking almost upon every occasion of *Good Manners*, and *Brotherly Love*, of *Moderating* the Affections, and of the *Rules of Equity*, *Truth*, and *Sincerity*, of *abstaining from Frauds*, *from Envy* and *from Lying*, and of an infinite number of other Things of a Moral Nature, which

(a) Eph. 5.  
1.  
1 John 4.  
17.

here



here and elsewhere he talks very handsomely of ; yet he no sooner engages with an Adversary in any matter relating to himself, but presently he openly violates and breaks through them all. But how can thole do otherwise who rather Scoff at the Invocation of the Spirit of *Jesus* to illuminate and heal their inward Parts, and to work and dwell in them for ever, under the opprobrious Epithets of *Fanaticism*, *Mystical Fooleries*, *empty Imaginations*, and *Ridiculous Spiritualities* ; how can thole do it, I say, who rather Scoff and Ridicule such Things, than look upon them as the Substance of *Religion*, by which alone we can be restored to the Image of God, and united to God himself ? May it please God to Convert them, and all of us from our own evil ways to the right ways of the Spirit of our Saviour !

XVIII. Of the  
true and false  
love of our  
Neighbour.

XVIII. Here *Parrhasius* insinuates, That those who know what the Love of our Neighbour is, will acknowledge that in my Letter to Mr. *Le Clerc* I have violated that Love, and that indeed by the *Blackest Malice*, under the mask of *Religion*. He that would know and judge by the Lamp of the Light of corrupt Nature and Cloudy Reason, what the Love of our Neighbour is, cannot but be very much deceived, and will take that vicious Love, which promotes our unhappiness, when 'tis grateful to our own selfish Inclinations, for the true Love of our Neighbour. Had I soothing and commended Mr. *Le Clerc* in his Errors ; had I been any wise Instrumental or Contributed my assistance to spread them, this in his and *Parrhasius's* Opinion, would have shewn that I have a true Love for my Neighbour, when yet in reality I should thereby have contributed to and promoted his Misery and that of others. The Divine Light, which they deride, shews quite another thing ; for, detecting the pernicious Errors of our Neighbour, it tells us that 'tis the Part of true Love to endeavour by exposing them to set him free from them ; But if he will not be set at Liberty, yea, if he yet farther desire by spreading them to infect others, and thereby endanger their Salvation ; The Love of our Neighbour calls upon us to admonish and warn others against those Errors, and Frauds, which some make use of in order to cover and instill their Poison into Mens Minds. Now whether my Letter to Mr. *Le Clerc* be written according to the Dictates of this Love

Love or not, I leave others, that have considered rightly of it, to judge.

XIX. *Parrhasius* in objecting against my Devotion, as if it was mixed with *Malice*, gives a fresh instance of his scoffing Temper. If he thinks that by his Jest, such as is that of an *Extatick Devotion*, he shall be able to hinder me from endeavouring in all my Writings to bring Mens Minds to God, and to Love and Worship him, he is greatly deceived. Let him be, for me, and let him continue a Scoffer, if he pleases, to the Day of Judgment, that shall give me no disturbance. They that are best acquainted with me know that I affect no shew of Devotion. But *Parrhasius* had a Mind to pronounce me guilty of a singular sort of Hypocrisy, when to his *Irony* of Devotion he joins the Accusation of the blackest *Malice*: For a great shew of Devotion joined with the blackest *Malice*, cannot but be the most execrable sort of Hypocrisy. How agreeably does *Parrhasius* act here with the *Love of his Neighbour*! How ignorant is this Innocent Man what it is to defame another, and that even in Relation to the hidden Things of the Heart, and the most inward Recesses of the Mind! but he that by the Calumnies and Reproaches that he has cast upon the most celebrated Writers of the purest Antiquity, and also upon many of a later Date, has so clearly shewn the Regard he has to the *Love of his Neighbour*, and how solicitously he has kept himself from all Suspicion of *Malice*, may by the same Right, and with the same Justice set himself up also as a Judge of other Mens Thoughts and Hearts!

What that *Malice* is whereof *Parrhasius* accuses me, he no where tells us, that so he may shew himself to be all of a piece, by accusing blindly and proving nothing. I will tell for him what it is. In this then consists my *Malice*, that when I saw that Mr. *Le Clerc* neither knew himself nor the Truth, and that he not only entertained Capital Errors himself, but was also very Ambitious to spread them in the World; and that upon shewing him the Truth he would neither leave them nor desist from propagating them; but that he rather endeavoured by all the Means and Artifices he could contrive to circumvent those who differ'd from him, or that by shewing him the weakness of his Cause endeavour to set him free from his Errors; I say, in this consists the heinousness

nels of my Malice, because in that *Letter* I exposed his Counterfeit Picture as in a Glass or Table ; and that not to himself only, but also to others ; nor did I do it by the strength of my own Imagination, or in mine own Words (as *Parrhasius* uses to do) but from his own Actions and Writings, having quoted the Places and Pages of his Books, and even his own very Words. And hence it comes that he who thought he had concealed himself sufficiently under the cover of many Artifices, appears more naked to himself and others than he would, altho' it be done for the benefit of others, that they may not be deceived by him, yea and for his own good also, would he repent. But being resolved not to repent, Self-Love, unwilling to see its own Filthiness (which it Loves and is pleased with) uncovered and exposed, not only looks upon that as Hatred ; but also, (because Care is taken to prevent all excuses, so that nothing can do but to acknowledge its own Filthiness, and to deprecate its Fault) Interprets it as *Malice* ; and because the Proofs of the matter are shewn more clearly in their proper Places, that Light is to his Self-Love black Darkness, and filthy Blackness ; whence he says the whole proceeds from the *blackest Malice*.

XX. Of St. Austin's Opinion about Grace, defended by me after a Comparative manner.

\* See the foregoing Letter to Mr. Le Clerc.

XX. *Parrhasius* having a mind to touch upon some Particulars, but always without Proof, downright accuses me of *Insincerity*, when at the same time he gives a fresh Instance of his own. As to St. *Austin's* Opinion about Grace, I observed Three Things, \* 1. That he held the necessity of Inward, Operating and Saving Grace ; which I both then did and still do approve of. 2. But that it was offer'd to some particular Persons only ; and 3. That it is irresistible ; which two last particulars I neither then did, nor yet do approve of. Where then have I offer'd to defend or make an *Apology* for Things for which I myself have the greatest Abhorrence, as our Author speaks ? Let *Parrhasius*, if he cannot deceive us, prove his Assertion. What I have done is this. After I had consider'd these two last Heads, which I really condemn as such, by way of Comparison with Mr. Le Clerc's Notion, asserting universal and resistible Grace, but such a Grace as is no Grace ; a Grace which is not inward, by the working whereof our most inward Parts are healed and saved ; but a superficial appearance and shadow of Grace, which being offer'd to Proud Hearts, en-

creases



creases their Pride, and is very Consistent with it : In this Case, and *Comparatively* speaking, I said then, and still affirm it, that St. *Austin's* Doctrine of the necessity, truth and solidity of the Grace of God working inwardly in us, altho' the *Error* as to the irresistibility and particularity thereof be annexed to it, is yet infinitely better and less hurtful than Mr. *Le Clerc's Pelagian*, universal and resistible Grace. For Mr. *Le Clerc's Socinian* Grace cannot subsist with Salvation, seeing it is not the inward Operation of God healing the Soul inwardly ; yea, it cherishes and encreases Pride ; and should they say that 'tis of God, it makes God a Friend and Companion of the Proud. St. *Austin's* Doctrine retains the true Substance of salutary Grace, the Foundation of Salvation, altho' it ascribe to the same one or two Qualities which do not so well agree with it, but which however do not change the Nature thereof : They are such as are apt to raise some Difficulties only in some Subjects, and that not always neither ; yea and in some Sense they are true also.

For all sensible Grace is *Irresistible* as to the sensation in the Soul, however it be not so as to the effect or certain Conversion : Then all Grace of Correspondence or mutual Concurrence is *Particular*, and is given only to those that correspond and concur with the first Grace after a proper manner. It may also happen that one thinking that he was Converted by a Particular and Irresistible Grace, may draw this good Conclusion from it ; seeing the Great and Omnipotent God has vouchsafed to turn me to himself by his own efficacious and irresistible Grace, therefore I am bound above many others to Love him, and to obey him without the least resistance ; all this one may really do. And to such a Man that Erroneous Defect which is mixed with his true Belief about Grace, is (by accident) very salutary and beneficial : Nor ought we to endeavour rashly to weed it out, least by plucking up the Tares added to the Good Seed, the Good Seed of Love and Obedience which has so close a Coherence with them, be also rooted up and destroyed. We must rather wait until Love and Obedience grow up in such a Person to Maturity ; and then God will communicate new Light, which alone will dissipate and destroy whatever was Imperfect in him before. But in Mr. *Le Clerc's Pelagian* Grace there is no solid Good ; we can hope for no good fruit from thence,

*In what Sense the Divine Grace may be said to be irresistible and particular : In an Erroneous Sense it may by accident do Good : But Mr. Le Clerc's Grace cannot.*

thence, neither of its own producing, nor by accident: For it is the Rejection of the Divine Operation working out our Salvation, and the Assertion only of some external Appearances, whereby, rejecting the Marrow and the Life, they support the Pride of the Heart, and consequently hurry the Soul to Perdition.

**XXI. Of the Objection of Hatred.**

**XXI.** 'Tis not Mr. *Le Clerc*'s Person, as *Parrhasius* falsely imagines, but his pernicious Errors, and the Artifices which he uses in proposing and spreading them, that I hate, and would have all Men hate them still; especially the *Pelagian* Rejection and Contempt of the Grace of God; which is an Error they ought to abhor as much as Hell itself: and he that would know what urgent and weighty Reasons I have for this most just desire, may find them at large \* elsewhere. But those that have established Self-Love for a Rule, and whose Pride is founded in the Power and Strength of Corrupt Reason, think that to hate their Persons and to hate their Errors is the same Thing; for their own Errors, and their own Reason they Love as they do themselves.

\* See the General Considerations from §. 10 to 16. Also the Divine Oeconomy, vol. v. ch. i.

**XXII. Of St. Austin's Opinion of Constraint even by Punishments. That he does not treat there of matters of Faith; but of Externals and Matters of Discipline.**

**XXII.** Here again *Parrhasius* after his own way and in his own Words perverts what I blamed Mr. *Le Clerc* for in the foregoing Letter, with Reference to another Charge against St. *Austin*. I observed with some great Men, that in the Case of the *Donatists*, and even in St. *Austin*'s Letter to *Vincentius* about it, he did not treat of matters of Faith, or of any Dogmatical Articles of Faith, which one part would have compelled the other to believe; but only of External Matters relating to Ecclesiastical Discipline and Policy, as to which if any difference about the Truth of some Things did arise, it was wholly founded in a Dispute about a matter of Discipline. The *Donatists* appealed to the Emperor, the Emperor refer'd it to the Bishops, and they again and again to him, whether *Cecilianus*, Bishop Elect of *Carthage*, was Criminal; and afterwards whether they that had elected him were not so too? In which Dispute, they don't meddle with Orthodoxy or Heresy. For both sides being often heard, the accused are declared Innocent, and *Cecilianus* the lawful Bishop, to whom and to his Successors, they refuse that External Obedience and Ecclesiastical Submission which was due to their Pastors, and which they were adjudged to give even by the Emperor's Command; and therefore they set up

up a Refractory Assembly or Schism against the Peace of the Church, and against that Obedience enjoined by the Civil Powers. Then they were divided into two Parties among themselves; one, who were afterwards called *Circumcelliones*, being agitated with strange Fury, raised violent Seditions, betook themselves to force, and even committed many cruel Murders; the other was more quiet, but yet refused to submit to the Emperor's Decree. New Laws were made against those in order to enquire into their Crimes, and to punish them as they deserved: And here St. *Austin* did shew himself a most ardent Intercessor and Advocate for them, as his Letters bear Witness, and as all acknowledge to his Honour, even *Grotius* himself, with *Erasmus* and other Learned Men. Against those who were only Refractory, it was ordained that they should return to Peace, and to Unity, and to all due Obedience, upon Penalty of forfeiting their Estates: But of this they complained thus: *That none ought to be compelled to Justice*; (they are *Vincentius's* own Words,) *none ought to be forced to UNITY*. This St. *Austin* denied, and maintained that those (Refractory Persons) might, by such Laws made by the Civil Powers, be justly compelled to Peace and Unity, and to a due Obedience and Discipline for the Tranquility of the Church; tho' he had been of another Opinion before. Nor does he ascribe any other Heresy to them, either here or in his \* Treatise of Heresies, but that for Crimes which they had alledged, but had not proved against *Cecilianus*, they disturbed the External Peace of the Church: Nor did they complain of any Doctrines or Articles of Faith being imposed upon them. And I challenge Mr. *Le Clerc* with all his Critical Subtilty, to find out or discover any Thing more than this, as to the substance of the matter.

\* chap. 69.

For, if afterwards any Controversies arose in the Church, whether it was Corrupt and had fallen away, by Communicating with those whom the *Donatists* accused as Criminals, these were only pretences for their Rebellion, which was only grounded or engrafted upon the *Cecilian* Quarrel. And tho' St. *Austin* sometimes speaks of Compulsion to embrace the Truth, or to forsake Error; that Truth is only the Truth of the Cause or Fact decided; that is, that it is true, that *Cecilianus* and his Friends, namely, the Church, were not Criminals and Traytors, but truly Innocent: And then

*In what Sense here the Words Truth and Error, &c. must be taken.*



then that the *Donatists*, who had appealed to the Emperors Decision, ought to acknowledge it as *true* and *just*, at least by an outward Submission, and not any more disturb the External Order of the Church; but rather own their *Error*, and the *False* Opinion they had of *Cecilianus*, and relinquish them; or at least that they should behave themselves so outwardly, for the Preservation of Discipline and Good Order, as if they had acknowledged and relinquished them: Which indeed is no more than what is very justly required in all Matters Cognizable before Civil Courts of Judicature, and which every one is bound to comply with, however he may think himself to be unjustly cast. All then that *St. Austin* maintains as to this matter of Compulsion and Punishments, and which he defends *from the Event*, is this: That these Punishments, and this Compulsion, are often a means of bringing Refractory Persons to themselves, and of making them see and acknowledge their Error, that they themselves were in the Fault, and that those whom they blamed, are Innocent; and that therefore Constraint and Punishments do help to make them acknowledge the *Truth* of such Innocence.

Mr. Le Clerc's  
*Absurd, Critical Interpretation of St. Austin's Letter.*  
\* *Defens. de Sentim.* p. 367.

† *Ibid.* p. 365, 366.

What then does Mr. *Le Clerc's* Critics, that Principal, if not the only Key of all true Interpretations, without which 't would be a Crime to presume to interpret any Thing, what then, I say, does Mr. *Le Clerc's* Critics endeavour to charge against *St. Austin*? First, he says, \* *That in St. Austin's Letter to Vincentius, there is an Apology for that abominable Doctrine, viz. † That 'tis Lawful to force Mens Consciences, and to Persecute for Religion.* But here if by the Phrase *to Persecute for Religion, or to force Consciences*, Mr. *Le Clerc* means a Persecution and Compulsion, whereby Refractory Persons are by the Authority of the Magistrate compelled to be Peaceable and Quiet, and to observe good Order and Discipline towards their Neighbours, and those that are set over them, as it ought to be here taken, it is nothing but a Ridiculous Censure, unless we may call it Slanderous too, for calling that an *abominable Doctrine*, or that says it is to *force Consciences, and to Persecute for Religion*: And I am convinced that the Remonstrants themselves, if in the Synod of *Dort* there had been no mention made of the Doctrine of the Five Articles, if the whole Question had turned upon this, whether any Pastor or Professor should be declared Guilty or Innocent; and being declared Innocent by the Synod, and

and even by the Civil Magistrate himself, whether the Remonstrants ought to have acquiesced in such a Judgment, or whether or no if upon such an account a Schism had been made, they might not have been compelled to preserve the Peace and Unity of the Church; I am convinced, I say, that in such a Case they would all unanimously have agreed to the Opinion which countenances Unity, and therefore would have readily granted, that those that continue Obstinate and Refractory, might be by the Magistrate compelled, even by Punishments, to observe Unity; and they would have Laughed had any of their Number started this Objection of Mr. *Le Clerc*, that this is to force Consciences and to Persecute for Religion. Let Mr. *Le Clerc* try the Experiment, and ask them, whether or no the Troubles, or it he pleases, the Persecution and Compulsion of *Grotius* and the first Remonstrants had not been just and Lawful, if the Synod and Magistrates had only required this of them. To recognize and acknowledge *Gomar* or any of that Party to be not a Criminal, but a lawful Pastor or Professor of *Leyden*; that so they might not upon such a weak pretence make a Schism in the Church, nor condemn all the Reformed Church, as if it was not a true Church; which yet they obstinately refused to comply with? Let Mr. *Le Clerc*, I say, make this Tryal, and he will quickly see, or be informed, that even his own Party, under Parallel Circumstances, would have been of the same Opinion with St. *Austin*.

But because Mr. *Le Clerc* would expose St. *Austin* to the Envy and Hatred of the World, that so the same might reflect and fall back again from him upon his Anti-Pelagian Doctrine concerning the necessity of inward Grace; it was necessary in order to this to invent and charge some very wicked and odious Things upon him. He therefore Taxes him with this, that that Opinion of his concerning Compulsion and Punishments, regards Matters of Faith, and Matters Dogmatical, as if he justified the using force in order to propagate Particular \* Doctrines and Opinions. Which how false it is, is evident even from the Nature of the Subject that was in Question, or even from those † Examples which Mr. *Le Clerc* quotes from St. *Austin* in favour of his own Opinion, viz. *The Laws made against the Pagan Sacrifices; Christ's whipping the Jews; and the Apostles delivering Men over to Satan;* in which 'tis as clear as

*He Taxes St. Austin with Falsities, and from them draws falser Conclusions.*

\* Defens. de Sentim. p. 367.

† Defens. de Sentim. p. 367, 368, 369.

the Sun that these Things were not done with design to compel Men to believe any *Doctrines*; for those Laws do not Ordain or Command the Gentiles to change their Idolatrous Opinions for Christian Opinions; nor did *Christ* whip the *Jews* in order to compel them to believe that he was the *Messias*: Nor did the Apostles deliver some over to Satan, that by that means they might be compelled to embrace the Christian Faith. But in all these Cases, what is proposed is only to restrain and bring into order some External and Publick Acts, which were Repugnant either to those Principles which they admitted and approved of themselves, or to the Decency of the External Worship, or to the Dictates of unprejudiced Nature, and to Vertue and Probity. True it is, I do not take upon me to defend all St. *Austin's* Examples and Arguments, as if they were always pertinent and suitable to the Subject; but 'tis sufficient to defend and hold the sum and substance of the Matter, which comes all to this, That the Dispute with him was not about *Doctrines* and Opinions; but only about some External and Publick Acts.

\* *Clerc's* Defens. de Sentim. p. 369, 370.

So that Mr. *Le Clerc* with all his Critics is infinitely mistaken, when after Taxing St. *Austin* with an Opinion which he never held, he endeavours, and that very maliciously, to charge that venerable Father, and others of his Spirit, with a more than Diabolical Malice, as \* *If they took Pleasure in bringing Damnation upon some Men, by inflicting capital Punishments upon them for OPINIONS deserving Damnation, when they are in a state of Damnation at the time that they are put to Death.* Observe I pray, into what extravagances the sacred choler, shall I say, or Fury of such Critics betrays them! Nor is this enough; St. *Austin's* Doctrine, if we will believe him, even subverts and destroys the Publick Tranquility and Security: † *From St. Austin's Principles, says he, there will flow these very pernicious Consequences; that they give a RIGHT to any one that's more powerful (or stronger) to persecute others; for EVERY ONE that's persuaded of the TRUTH of his own OPINIONS, and that others are in an ERROR, will from thence be bound in CONSCIENCE to persecute them, that so he may reclaim them from their Error.* In this consequence of this new Critic, there are two or three Things falsely supposed: First, that the dispute here is about Faith, about Opinions and Errors of the Mind, which is the Foundation of all the Critics, Falsities: Secondly,

† *Idem* ibid. p. 370.



ly, That *St. Austin* and his Followers held Principles, from which it follows, that the right of acting by force belongs or is extended to every one; and, thirdly, that this Right is founded in Conscience. But 'tis most evident, that 'twas never said nor allowed of in this matter, that every one might use Force and Punishments against those Refractory Persons; much less that he might do it as from a Motive of Conscience: But those Legal compulsive Punishments against those Refractory Men were committed only to certain Persons delegated by the Supreme Power for that purpose, who were obliged to inflict them, not according to the Instinct of their own Conscience, or as they thought Good, but according to a *Law made*, and as the Tenor of the Publick Edict directed, as any Body may at first sight observe without the Assistance of any Artificial Criticks. Wherein then has *St. Austin* offended so much, that he should be so falsely and so basely exposed by a Critick to the Horror and Execration of all Men? In this only. That Holy Prelate was not a *Pelagian*; but was infinitely averse to all the *Pelagian* and *Socinian* Principles. Therefore all the Arts and Subtilties of the *Pelagian* Criticks must be fought to and made use of in order to Blacken and Discredit his Authority.

23. But however, Why do we hear *Mr. Poiret* (23.) Of so long upon this Subject, who, if we may believe *Parrhasius's Parrhasius*, is not capable of Understanding any thing of insulting *Re-the matter*? *Mr. Poiret*, says he, ought not to presume flexion on *Mr. to speak of such Things as he does not understand*. But *Poiret*, That why don't he understand any of *St. Austin's* Letters to he ought not *Vincentius*? because he is not skilled in Criticks: to pretend to *He will not study Criticks*: Yea, he even despises that understand Art, or at least he pretends that he despises it. This *St. Austin's* is the very thing I have \* elsewhere observed, that meaning; be- these Medlers do with much labour, and as if they cause he is had some mighty worthy Business in Hand, reduce ignorant of such Things into Arts and Systems, which otherwise Criticks. every Man of common Sense has a right to, so that \* *De Eru-* dit. Lib. 2. times very impertinent Things to them, they create § 54. N. 12. the Appearance of a new Art, known forsooth and and Lib. 3. peculiar to themselves only, that so afterwards § 63. when they are drove to any straits, they may for an evasion pretend, that such a matter, and the Under- standing thereof, belongs to that Art of theirs, which

which is peculiar to themselves and their Followers, and that therefore all the rest that are ignorant of, or that despise the same, ought not to be regarded. That is, a Man of good plain Sense cannot discern whether *Parrhasius* puts Chaff or Corn upon him, because he knows not how to discant upon them Critically! None therefore before this blessed System of Mr. *Le Clerc's* Critical Art, was fit to understand these words of St. *Austin* to *Vincentius*, which contain the whole matter: *We blame them for this; because of their own head they accused, Cecilianus to the Emperor, whereas they ought first to have convicted him before his Colleagues: That when the Emperor acted much more regularly, in remitting the Cause of the Bishops brought before him, to Bishops themselves; they refused to submit to their Decision and to be at PEACE with their Brethren; but also accused those Bishops who were appointed their Judges, before an earthly King. Again, they appealed from another Episcopal Judgment to the same Emperor; and even when he interposed and gave JUDGMENT against them, they refused to submit to the Truth, and to return to Peace.*

—— For that Emperor (*Constantine*) first, ordained in this Cause, that those that were convicted, and that **OBSTINATELY RESISTED UNITY**, should forfeit their Estates. But now supposing that your Ancestors upon their complaints had gained their Cause, and that the Emperor had made such a Decree against the Communion of *Cecilianus*, would you think you deserved the Name of the Guardians of the Church, and the Maintainers of its **PEACE** and **UNITY**, when at the same time you should blame the legal Proceedings against those, who of their own head accused others, and yet could prove nothing, and who though they were offered it, yet would not return to the Bosom of **PEACE**; and all this under pretence, that none ought to be forced to **UNITY**; and that we ought not to render evil for evil. Again, none could Understand the meaning of these words of St. *Austin* in his Letter by way of Answer to *Boniface*, who desired to know, whether the *Donatists* erred in point of Doctrine, as did the *Arians*? The *Donatists* acknowledge one substance of the Trinity——They speak wholly as the Catholic Church believes; nor do they differ about that at all: but they unhappily wrangle about **COMMUNION ONLY**; and through the perverseness of their Error they are guilty of **Rebellious ENMITIES** against the

**UNITY**

UNITY of Christ——They acknowledge with us, Christ as he is in the Scriptures——But they prefer their own Disputes (concerning the Unity and Peace of the Church) to the Divine Testimonies, because that upon the Account of Cecilianus, sometime Bishop of Carthage, against whom they objected CRIMES which they never could nor can prove, they DIVIDED themselves from the Catholick Church, that is, from the UNITY of all Nations. Are not these, and the like Passages in those Letters, most profound Ænigma's, and such as not I only, but even all those who are not yet versed in Mr. Le Clerc's and Parrhasius's Criticks, that is almost all the Divines, Civilians, Physicians, Philosophers and other Learned Men of the World cannot penetrate into, and that therefore neither they nor Mr. Poiret ought to presume to speak of such things as they do not understand? Who would not be ashamed thus to insult almost all the learned World with so little Modesty, out of a most vain Ostentation of his own Art and Skill, and that by so absurd and ridiculous a Specimen thereof? Thus 'twould be Arrogance in any one that has not the same skill in Criticks as Mr. Le Clerc and Parrhasius, to pretend to meddle (as he says) in the Business of interpreting the above-mentioned Passages, and saying, that they import no more than this, "That a certain matter of Fact, which regarded the Peace of the Church, was decided even at the instances of the Accusers, by the Imperial Authority: That he first enjoined them to be Peaceable, and to live in Unity: That the Party that gained the Cause offered Peace to their Accusers: That the Accusers were Refractory: And that therefore the Emperors, as being their Judges, ordered them, if they refused to submit and live in Peace, to be punished." But, how necessary is it to understand Criticks! Let such a rash Interpretation, which would presume to appear without Parrhasius's Critical Art, be cancelled; and by the help of this new Guide, which alone has Eyes to conduct us, in the room thereof let this other be substituted; viz. "That those words signify that the Controversy was about matters of Faith and Doctrine, and about Dogmatical Articles and Opinions; and that 'twas ordained by an Imperial Decree, and approved of by St. Austin, that every one is bound in Conscience



“ to persecute all the rest that differ from him in  
 “ any Opinion or Doctrine.

But what if *Poivet* be not the only one that puts that Sense and Construction which he has given, upon *St. Austin's* Words and Discourse; but that besides the Natural import of the Discourse, and the History of the Fact, he have also others of the same Mind with him, and whom *Mr. Le Clerc* himself often commends, and who, by his own Confession, are Men of great Eminence and Learning? In my Letter to *Mr. Le Clerc* I quoted *Erasmus* and *Mr. Claude*, a Famous French Protestant Divine, and to these I will now add two famous *Leyden* Divines, *D. D. Spanhemius* and *Wirsius*; and if *Mr. Le Clerc* thinks fit to accuse either of them of being ignorant of Criticks, or of presuming to meddle in things which they did not understand, Let him see to it. Let us hear the Celebrated *Spanhemius*: He in his Christian History (*Secul. V.*) shewing that the Papists do very unjustly urge *St. Austin's* Opinion in relation to the Donatists, in order to justify their Practice of Oppressing and using Violence with Protestants, says, (a) *The Donatists were to be kept under by the Laws as SEDITIOUS Persons; For they did not separate upon the Account of ANY ARTICLE of FAITH, nor did they alledge that any New Article had been introduced, which the Catholicks maintained, but would not adhere to what was asserted — being also often invited by the Indulgence of the Emperor, — after they had of their own accord obstinately withdrawn themselves without any FUNDAMENTAL Cause. Moreover they gave themselves up to cruel VIOLENCE.* And the Learned *Wirsius*, in his Sacred Miscellanies, where he gives a short and Succinct Account of that long and Intricate History of the Donatists, comprizes the Substance of the whole matter in these Words: (a) *The Donatists with the Catholicks in Africa, professed the SAME FAITH, they had the SAME WORSHIP of God, they used the same Sacraments and Ceremonies, nor was there ANY CONTROVERSY among them upon THAT ACCOUNT. They ONLY differed about the Ordination of Cecilianus, which they pretended was not performed in the way and order it ought to have been, and that upon that Account the whole African Church was so polluted by the Communication of the Crime, that it lost the Priviledges and Character of*

(a) In the  
 first Tome of  
 his Works,  
 p. 1020.

(a) Misc.  
 Tom. 1. p.  
 817, &c.

a Christian Church; and not only the African Church, but even the other Churches beyond Sea that communicated with her.—This was the SOLE CAUSE which they alledged for their Separation. After these Reasons, after these Witnesses, after the Fact which speaks for itself, I ingeniously confess that *Poiret*, who does not at all make use of Mr. *Le Clerc*'s most singular Art, dares not presume to put that Interpretation, which he does, upon St. *Austin*'s Words, as if they justified or allowed of Persecution for matters of Faith and Opinion: Yea, *Poiret* little regards, but rather greatly despises, and even abhors such sort of Criticks, which from the Text itself of Books can draw such Interpretations, as enervate, break and destroy the force and Substance of what they are designed to teach us, and substitute the contrary wholly in their room. To cultivate such a horrid Art, and to apply it to the Holy Scriptures which deserve all possible Veneration, and so by that means to Deface and Destroy the adorable Mysteries of God, with their true Design and meaning, seems to me to be a Calamity that can never be enough lamented, and therefore only fit to be reserved for the wicked Men of the last times.

24. Nor yet for all this would I be thought to despise the true Principles and Grounds of Interpretation, nor yet Criticism itself, if taken in a right Sense, and as restrained within due Bounds. For that I esteem as much as is needful, and according as it deserves: Nor am I altogether Ignorant what it is, or how it is distinguished from *Parrhasius*'s false Criticks: Which I shall now be willing to shew a little more at large, in hopes it may be of use to some, or that *Parrhasius* himself, who boasts and prides himself in his vain Pretensions of knowing more than all the World besides, may thereby be made a little more modest.

I will therefore shew first, even from Mr. *Le Clerc* himself, That *Parrhasius* ought not to have denied me the true Critical Principles of Interpretation, much less to upbraid me that they were wanting in the Interpretation of one easy Letter. Then I will prove that even Mr. *Le Clerc*'s Criticks, which *Parrhasius* boasts so much of, is false even in the very Definition that he has given himself; and lastly, I will propose some more solid Principles relating to true and false Criticism, and such as Mr. *Le Clerc* and

(24.) Of the Contempt of Criticism objected against me.

I do not absolutely despise it.

and *Parrhasius* are yet ignorant in or have not thought of; from all which it will appear, what his Criticks are at the Bottom; and finally what that is which deserves to be esteemed; and on the contrary what ought to be despised, and wholly rejected as Insignificant and Spurious.

*The FIRST.*  
Mr. Le Clerc  
contradicts  
*Parrhasius's*  
insulting Re-  
flexion upon  
me.

(a) Bibl.  
Choisie, Tom.  
IV. p. 145.

As to the first, I shall use Mr. Le Clerc's own Words in the IXth Tome of his *Bibliothèque*, where he says, (a) *The general and infallible Principles of true Criticism, or of the Art of Understanding the Ancients, and of drawing out their Consequences, are comprehended in Logick.* But *Poiret* may, as he thinks, without any Arrogance pretend to say that he understands Logick as well as *Parrhasius*, and that he could instruct some therein before even *Parrhasius* could Interpret, or possibly Read a *Latin* Discourse. If therefore the forelaid words of Mr. Le Clerc be true, and if *Parrhasius* be of the same Mind, he has no reason to say that I am Ignorant of the General and more certain (I choose to say rather than *Infallible*) Principles of true Criticism, or of the Art of Understanding the Ancients, and of drawing Consequences from their Words. Which directly contradicts that Insolent and Unbecoming Reflexion in the *Parrhasian* Censure.

*The SECOND.*  
*The Examination*  
*of Mr.*  
*Le Clerc's*  
*Definition of*  
*CRITICISM,*  
*wherein four*  
*or five blunders*  
*are shewn.*

(a) Art. Crit.  
Vol. I. p. 1.

But possibly *Parrhasius* depends upon that Definition of Criticism which Mr. Le Clerc gives in the beginning of his Volumes about the *Critical Art*, according to which he will easily exclude very many, and me among the rest, from being yet masters of the true Principles of Interpretation. But if it was so, I would appeal from that Definition, to the above quoted words of Mr. Le Clerc, which if true, as they are, it must needs be that a Definition from which the contrary would follow, must be false in some thing. But what is that Definition? (a) *CRITICISM*, says he, *Is the Art of Understanding Ancient Writings, whether in Verse or Prose; and of knowing which of them are Genuine, and which Spurious.*

And indeed this Definition does not labour under one falsity only. First, If among the *WRITINGS* of the *ANCIENTS*, of whom he speaks here, he comprehend those that are Divinely Inspired; 'tis false that they can be rightly understood by the help of Criticks, or by any Art of human Reason, not to say of Reason as it is corrupted. Every Inspired Writer may truly say of his Writings, that in  
order



order to understand that which he Delivers, *There is no need of that Art ; but of Faith and Silence*, (or of a believing and silent Heart and Understanding, and Internal and silent Prayer.) Surely, 'tis not to be imagined that those Sacred Writers should have left us in the dark as to that principal and important Question about the Understanding of their Writings. But what do they teach us as to that matter ? In a Thousand places they refer us to Divine Illumination, to the Gift of the Spirit of Wisdom, to God's opening our Eyes, to Revelation, to the inward Union and Instruction of God's Spirit, all which must be sought and obtained of God by offering up to him continual Prayers and Intercessions in Faith ; by humbly opening our Hearts, and submitting our Understanding to him ; by acknowledging our own Blindness, Darkness and Impotence ; and finally, by Imploring his gracious Illumination and Assistance ; and by faithfully practising what by his Gift we know already. Let Mr. *Le Clerc* shew me in what place of the Holy Scriptures this Insignificant Art of his is recommended as necessary to the Understanding those Sacred Books, and that but so much as once, tho' he every where praises it a Thousand and a Thousand times ; yea, does not the Spirit of God in express Terms, and in effect more than once condemn the same in the Scribes and Jewish Doctors, and in the Wise Men of the World ; and do not most complain that the use thereof throughout all Mr. *Le Clerc's* Writings tend rather to enervate and subvert the Sense, than to give a true Interpretation of the Scriptures.

See I Cor. 2.  
v. 11—16.

Secondly, If by the *Writings of the Ancients*, the Definition mean Books not indeed Inspired by God in so singular a manner, but written and proceeding from a good, pious and Holy Will, such as are many Spiritual Books treating of Sacred and Divine matters ; it is likewise false that the understanding the Substance of them depends upon Criticism, or can be obtained by it : For that depends upon the Integrity of the Heart touched by God, joined with common Sense, and the Vulgar Knowledge of the Language, which either the Author or a faithful Translator has made use of. And this is so true, that as to the understanding even the Scripture itself, as to the Substance, and so far as is necessary to Salvation, Mr. *Le Clerc* owns (a) that it may be under-

(a) Sentiments, Let. 3.  
derstood

derstood without discussing or meddling with Critical Difficulties; and that it is so clearly delivered in the Sacred Books, that it cannot well be mistaken, even by the most Illiterate. Now from this Observation it follows, That the solid Sense and true meaning of any Book that Treats of Pious and Divine Subjects, and consequently that those which St. *Austin* wrote in the Spirit of Humility, of Love and of the Grace of God, may be better understood by one of a good Disposition, and that seeks after Humility, Charity and Grace, than by the most subtle ill-natured Critick, that is an Enemy to the Grace of God, to Humility, and to St. *Austin's* other Vertues and good Dispositions, and who consequently is altogether blind as to the Spiritual Sense and Precepts expressed in St. *Austin's* Words. As to prophane Writings, Common Sense with a tolerable Knowledge of the Language that they are written in, is in the main, and as to the Substance all that is necessary to the Understanding of them, as is evident from a Thousand Instances: And this should rather be refer'd to Grammar, and also to Logick, where it treats of this Interpretation, than to Criticism.

By this means, the special Object and proper matter of Criticism (and this is the Third defect in the Definition, which is a Defect of Pretermision) is nothing but *some Accidents not so essential* to the Substance of the Things Described in Words, wherein either for the sake of Pleasure, or possibly upon the Account of some accessory Advantage, such Things are more particularly discussed as regard some smaller Circumstances relating either to the Times or Places, or some particular Modes of Speech, and the like; and this should have been expressed in the Definition, that so instead of Trifles we might not look for Treasures (which it really has not) from Criticism.

Fourthly, When the Definition adds that by Criticism we distinguish *what Writings are Genuine, and what Spurious*, if he means this of such Writings as proceed from the Spirit of God, he deceives us again. This is solidly and fully done by the inward Light and Testimony of God and those that Love him. That *Voice, those Words* that are truly of God, *Those Sheep* know to be his, who are inwardly struck, affected and taught by the same in their Hearts, Criticism but a few Years ago discover'd to Mr. Le  
Clerc

*Clerc* that the *Pentateuch* is not the Genuine Work of *Moses*; the same Art (if not joined with some *Oeconomy*) afterwards shew'd him the quite contrary. And the very same Art does still dictate to him (or to the Author of the (a) *Epistles of Inspiration*) that the Books of *Job*, the *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, the *Song of Songs*, and some Places in the *Psalms* are not fit to be reckoned among the Number of the Genuine Works of the Spirit of God. In which matter surely he plainly discovers the blindness of his own Art, and more and more betrays the manifest Falsity of this his Definition with regard to Divine Objects.

(a) In the Book, *Sentimens des Theolog. de Holl. Epist. II. & 12.*

Fifthly, This Clause in the Definition of Criticism, relating to Genuine and Spurious Writings, seems to be added on purpose to lead us into a Noose; viz. That, seeing there are few among the Learned that take upon them to discuss those Things of themselves, our Criticks, when they see themselves reduced to Difficulties, and Non-plus'd about the substantial meaning of the Scriptures or any other Authors, may extricate themselves from them by objecting to their Adversaries, That they, because they have not applied themselves to learn the Art of discerning Genuine Writings from those that are Spurious, are Ignorant of Criticism, and therefore are not duly qualified to give the Sense of Authors.

For these Reasons it had been better first of all to distinguish CRITICISM, taken in a larger Sense, into Three Parts or Species; into Criticism about the Sense, into Criticism about the Words; and into Criticism about the Books themselves; and to allow the first to most, if not to all the Learned; to restrain the Second to a smaller Number, called *Philologues*; and the Third to a very few.

And by this means there had been no room left childishly to Insult those of the First sort, because they are not so well skilled in what belongs to the Second and Third Species, as those that call themselves Universal Criticks are, who yet are sometimes very Ignorant of what relates to themselves, as may be seen in Mr. *Le Clerc* himself, who having lately, (*Anno 1700*) undertaken to Revise and Publish the Works of the Apostolical Fathers, instead of the Genuine Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans, suffered, to the great detriment of the Work, a Spurious one to be Reprinted, because he knew not, though he be so great



great a Master in all sorts of Critical Learning, that more than Ten Years before ( 1689 ) Father *Ruinart* had published it at *Paris* in his Book Entituled *Acta Martyrum sincera & Selecta*, Page 695, &c. Together with the Genuine Acts of *Ignatius* in *Greek*, whence it might have been expected that such a Critick, and the Overseer of so great a Work, would have taken it and inserted it into his New Edition, which by the Addition of such a rare Jewel would have much recommended it before the first Edition. I know that he somewhere Excuses this Omission, by saying, That Father *Ruinart's* Book was not to be met with in these Parts: But he had dealt more Ingenuously had he plainly owned that he had neither heard of the Book, nor knew any thing of the Edition of that Genuine Letter in it: For from the Edition of *Lactantius of the Deaths of the Persecutors*, at *Utrecht*, Anno 1692, it appeared publickly that that Book was in the hands of the Editors of *Lactantius*, to which they added all Father *Ruinart's* Preface on Mr. *Dodwel*, taken from thence. But how could this Book, called *The Genuine Acts of the Martyrs*, be so scarce in these Parts, when even I, who keep not a Critical Library, could have shewn it to any body that desired it, the First or Second Year after it was published, among my little Collection. After such an Error, might it not reasonably be expected that Mr. *Le Clerc* should bear more easily with the like or lesser Errors of others, and that he should not so roughly complain of those of *Berlin*, for that in their Edition of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, they omitted a Tract of his, Entituled, *Quis Dives Salvetur*, which had been published but Five Years before at *Oxford*, when yet a Genuine Epistle of *Ignatius* had been published full Eleven Years before his Edition of the Apostolical Fathers came out, and whereof mention had undoubtedly been made in some of the publick Journals?

*The THIRD.*  
Of Criticism,  
some Things  
Remarkable.  
(a) De Eru-  
dit. Lib. ii.  
§. 54, &c.  
Lib. iii. §.

And thus *Parrhasius* may see what I have to object against Mr. *Le Clerc's* Definition of Criticism.

Let him now come on, if he pleases, and see, whether ( (a) besides what I have elsewhere mentioned ) I cannot suggest some things of more solid use, which possibly he has not so much consider'd, or is not so well acquainted with, and which will be of more general use to every one, with relation to Criticism.

First,

First, I distinguish CRITICISM into two Sorts, viz. *Clear-sighted* and *Blind*.

I call that *Clear-sighted* Criticism, when the real Faculties of the Critick, which correspond to the Things or Objects of which he Treats, are so moved and touched with the more essential Affections of Things described in Books, that there remain only in the Things themselves, or in the External Modes and Words wherein they are express'd, some smaller and accessory matters, which are not so well apprehended, and which therefore should afterwards be, by the Sagacity of the Active Intellect, sought out and explained more at large; and in this indeed the Nature and Business of Real Criticism properly consists.

*Clear sighted  
Criticism  
what?*

I call that *Blind* Criticism, when the Real Faculties of the Critick, which correspond to the Things or Objects in Question, are not moved, as I may say, nor touched or affected by the Lively and Principal Vertues (or Emanations) of the Objects themselves: So that the Critick has no experience of them, nor ever felt them in a lively manner himself: But hearing however a great many Words and Discourses about them, and having a Mind to pass his Judgment upon them, he boldly undertakes to perform every thing by the Luxuriancy of his Imagination and active Intellect: He denies those Vertues and Truths which flow from those most Real Objects, and from their Affections and Operations, and the Sensations which they produce, because he never felt any of them; he looks upon them as Chimera's, and in their room sets up any absurd and monstrous Fancy of his own; he dwells wholly upon matters of the smallest Consequence, upon the nicety of Words, and every other little Circumstance, as if the stress and weight of Things lay wholly in them; finally, he frames and makes to himself confused Structures of all sorts, which though he does but handle and feel them in the Dark, yet so long as he does not see the True and Solid Objects themselves, he admires the Ingenuity of his own Contrivances, and does what he can to make others that are blind like himself, to admire them too.

*Blind Criticism  
what?*

In order to explain and shew the use of this Distinction more clearly, we must know, that there are Two sorts of Objects, viz. Spiritual, Internal and Divine Objects, with their Properties and Qualities, and

*A more particular  
Explanation of this  
Distinction.*

and the Operations flowing from them; and Corporeal, External and Physical Objects, with their Properties and Powers, and the Operations and Radiations or Tendencies of these again to communicate themselves by lively Impressions.

*Clear-sighted  
(or Real) Criticism  
Illustrated by a  
Similitude  
taken from  
Spiritual Objects.*

Now when a Man's Spiritual, Internal and Divine Faculties, which are made for Divine, Internal and Spiritual Objects, and their Impressions, have received in them by this or that way, more or less, the Action and Operation of those Objects, and of their Properties and Qualities, and are affected with them; and when afterwards such a Man either hears the Discourses of others, or reads Books that Treat of Spiritual and Divine Subjects; then presently, if he be but Master of the Language wherein they are spoken or written, he understands the Substance and Marrow of them, and the main scope and end that they drive at; and that even although those should express themselves less accurately and with less Propriety, and sometimes in an imperfect and defective manner, as it often happens among those who are more solicitous about Things than Words, and who know that they speak to such as are either acquainted already with what they Treat of, or know by Experience how they may be so; and who can easily accommodate their own Understanding to the Understanding and Sense of the Speaker or Writer. And indeed among such, even a Word or Two, though not altogether so proper, suffices to make them understand one another very well, and to conceive the whole Series of a matter (which if they were of another Disposition, no Words, no Criticisms could do,) so that presently they are able to Judge of the Lyon by his Foot, or to take the matter *at half a Word*. And if after all there be some Things Adventitious in the Words or Modes of Speech, or in the other Circumstances, that ought to be considered, they are better able to give their Opinions about them than any body else; and they will be sure to take care that their Conjectures and Opinions do not contradict the more Essential and Principal Vertues and Truths relating to Spiritual and Divine matters (because they are acquainted with them) and consequently that the Accessories do not destroy the Essentials, or be prefer'd to them. Therefore such CRITICISM in Sacred matters is by me called *clear-sighted* or *Real*, which I would by no means despise, because



because altho' those that are skilled therein, look upon it as an accessory and less necessary Thing, yet they do what they can to make it subservient to the Glory of God, and to promote, recommend, and illustrate Spiritual and Divine Knowledge.

In like manner in natural Things, if a Man's Real, External Faculties, namely, the Faculties of Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, Touching and the like, suited and adapted to Corporeal Objects and their Impressions, have received into them the Operations of their respective Objects, and of their Properties and Qualities, so that they are truly and in a lively manner affected with them; the Eyes, *to wit*, with Light and with the Irradiations and Images of Cælestial and Terrestrial Objects, beautified with the diversity of various Colours; the Ears, with the differences of sounds; the Tongue with variety of Tasts, and so of the rest; 'tis evident that when such a Person hears Discourses, or reads Books that treat of Things which he has formerly seen or tasted, presently, if he understands but the Language, he will without any trouble apprehend the meaning of the Discourse and the substance of the matter, even altho' the Speaker or Writer should not express himself so accurately: Yea, if those that communicate their Thoughts to one another by the Intervention of Words, have seen the Objects that they treat of, or have them before them, they will in a few Words express and discover such Things as those that have never seen nor been acquainted with the Things themselves, cannot with all the fluency of Words that they are Masters of, explain so as to be fully understood. Moreover, if in these Corporeal Things, or in the Words wherein they are expressed, some Things, not so essential nor so well understood, be yet to be discovered; or if there remain some Things to be deduced from others by the help of their own Industry and Reason, 'tis certain, that this is best to be done by such clear-sighted Persons as are well acquainted with what is substantial; nor is there any Danger that they will advance any Thing, or make any Deductions, contrary to the solid and fundamental Properties of the Things themselves, which they have at other times perceived in a lively manner, or which would subvert those Propositions. They will not ascribe to Light what belongs to Sounds, nor will they confound these with Colours, or Tasts, and the like; which are manifestly repug-

*The same is Illustrated by a Similitude taken from Corporeal Objects.*

nant to what they before knew and experienced of these Things.

*Blind Criticism Illustrated by the same Similitude drawn from Corporeal Things.*

But if a Man had not yet used any one of his Faculties, or if it had never been moved or affected by its respective real Objects; for instance, had any one been born with his Eyes shut, or with a film over them, and did he understand several Languages, and was he also a Grammarian, Logician, Philosopher and Historian, and was accustomed to hear many Discourses, and Books read to him; would he therefore, I pray, with all that Apparatus, and with all the Sagacity and Activity of his Reason, and by framing, considering, compounding and dividing such Ideas as they would suggest to him, and by all the Inferences he could draw from them, would he I say from all this be able to find out the true meaning and Interpretation, and to understand aright all that he heard others speak of Light and Colours, and of the coloured and lucid appearance of Cælestial and Terrestrial Things, and even of his own Body? Indeed he might very well pronounce the Words, Light, Colours, Sight, Beauty, Deformity; he might be able to translate these Words or Sounds, out of his own Language into *Latin, Greek, Hebrew or Arabic*; he might learn to add Phrases to Phrases, and say, that such and such are in this or that Author, and in this or that Place, that they are joined with such Things, and separated from others; he might also be able to turn or translate Discourses or Books as he hears them read out of one Language into another, and to mark the Faults of another Man's Discourse or Version: He might also say, because he had often heard it, that Objects are seen with the Eyes, and not with the Heels; that nothing is more pleasant than the Light; that Light makes the Day and Darkness the Night: That Opaque Bodies are discover'd and render'd more conspicuous by the Light; that the Eyes and the sight are the most beautiful of the Senses, with a Thousand other Things that he might chatter and guess at: Yea, possibly among the Ignorant or those that are Blind like himself, who would admire his Skill and Discourse, he might possibly presume to attempt to explain such Things, and to draw Conclusions and Axioms from them, and instead of the Truth pawn upon them his own most absurd Fancies; as for instance, that the red Colour resembles the sound of a Trumpet; that the Light of the Sun, that ripens Grapes and

and all sorts of Fruits, is a General or Universal Sauce or Pickle poured out of the Mouth of the Sun upon the Earth, and insinuating itself into all the Pores of Bodies that are fit to receive it, &c. And if it should so happen that together with applause any advantage should arise to such a Person from these and an infinite many more such Impertinencies, without doubt it would at last come to this, that he would take upon him to subject all Discourses and Books that he heard to his own Critical Rules and Judgment, to Judge of their Versions, and to laugh at those that should say that without the Knowledge of many Languages, without his Logical and Critical Rules, they can with a glance only of one Eye, illuminated by the Light and the Sun, and turned and exposed only to the Objects themselves, understand those Things better than he can do with all his Scholastic and Critical helps: Whom therefore he would look upon as very unfit Interpreters, confidently traducing those as Madmen and Fanaticks, that should affirm that almost every Thing in the Universe may be better known by the Eyes and the Light, than by the touch and feeling; in which alone, and possibly in the hearing, he would affirm that all true Knowledge of Things consists; and that from such a Knowledge, joined with Logic and Criticism, we ought to look for and receive the true Interpretation of all Things. All which indeed no Body that has the use of his Eyes, but must see that they are nothing but mere Fancies and Trifles puffed, buoyed up upon the Wings of Error and Arrogance, and having no Foundation but in the vain Opinion of a Blind Man of his own gross feeling, and of his insipid and mistaken Grammatical, Logical and Critical Learning.

Now this is exactly the Case with Relation to Spiritual and Divine Objects. If one has neglected the Life and Faculties of the inward Man, and has not turned himself towards Spiritual and Divine Objects, to receive their Operations and Impressions; if the Intellectual Eyes of his Mind are not open, nor have seen Light in the *Light of God*; if his Ears are shut, so that he has not heard the *Voice of the Father*, nor been taught of him, if he has not drawn near with his *Heart* to the Wisdom of God, nor has applied his *Mouth* to it, and so received the sincere *Milk of Understanding* to grow and live upon it; if he has not *Tasted* how Good the Lord is, and does not come to him in Spirit as

*This Similitude applied to the Illustration of Blind Criticism in Things Spiritual and Divine.*



unto a Foundation and Rock or *Living-Stone* upon which he may build all his Knowledge; if he does not *smell*, if he does not feel the *sweet savour of Christ*, and of his Divine Operations, Emanations and Spiritual Vertues; and if nevertheless and without any regard to these Things, he Hear with his outward Ears and Read Discourses and Books upon Divine Subjects, such as the Books of Scripture; yet tho' he may besides his own Language understand *Latin*, *Greek* and *Hebrew*, and all the Oriental Languages; tho' he may be a Logician, Philosopher and Historian, and be able to translate out of one Language into another, to judge of Versions, to pronounce those Words or Sounds that are used in the Sacred Writings, and Criticize upon Words and Things, and Circumstances with great Industry and Dexterity; tho' I say, he may be so qualified and be able to do all these Things, yet as to the substance of Things and all the Principal Heads, such a one in reality understands nothing at all; and is wholly Blind, and all his CRITICISM is BLIND, which tho' it may be able to produce some adventitious quirks about some Words, or the Style, or about some External and Historical Circumstances compared with one another, or with other Writers, it is nevertheless *Blind*, yea, altogether Blind as to the Substance, Foundation and Scope of the Things themselves, and when it treats of the Application of such Things to the Eternal and Divine Faculties of the Immortal and inward Man. Yea, when Men of Experience speak accurately of these Things, and give a solid Explanation and true Interpretation, such a Blind Critic will boldly deny and deride them, and confidently pronounce the Internal and lively Experiences of the Divine Operations to be nothing but Dreams and Enthusiasm; he will call those that have experienced such Things unfit and the worst of Interpreters, if possibly he find that they are Ignorant of some Languages, or of his Philosophy, and of all the Pedantic Embellishments which he with much Industry acquired to himself in his Blindness; to all which, and especially to blind *Criticism*, he will appeal, as to the only proper Interpreter of Discourses of Spiritual and Eternal Things, yea, he would very impertinently, not to say impiously Interpret the Promises of the Holy Spirits being poured out upon Men in the last Times, to import no more but that they shall then be great Proficients

in this Blind art of his : Which surely is an Impudent lye of Satan, and the last Device that he could make use of to extinguish all the Power, if so be there be yet any left, of the Life and Spirit of Christianity, and to draw all Men headlong into the Nets and Snares of *Pelagianism* and *Socinianism*. And indeed such *Blind Criticism* does nothing else with all the Divine Volumes it turns over, but to deny all Divine Things, Properties, Vertues and Operations mentioned in them which its blinder Mother, Corrupt Reason, does not comprehend ; and then to strain the Words (whereby those Things are expressed ) of the Scriptures and their Significations, and so to perplex every Thing by all the Artifices it can invent, that so those Sacred Words may seem to signify nothing of those Things that God intended, but rather the contrary : Then again, where it substitutes Things accommodated to its own natural and most Corrupted Taste, in the room of those Things signified by the Words of Scripture, and also from some less Principal and Accessory Circumstances of the Sacred Histories draws Conclusions, Observations and Institutions ; it can do nothing else but either broach Heresies, or confound one Thing with another, and Things Sound with those that are Corrupt, or instead of Real and Essential Vertues to present us only with their Superficial and Hypocritical outlides and appearances, with unnecessary Speculations and barren Ideas about them, and with a Thousand other vain and ridiculous Notions and Conceits, all which have no manner of Affinity with the lively Properties of Divine Things, but are rather contrary to them, nor are they consistent with salutary Truth and a good Disposition, as being unfit to kindle, nourish and increase in us the Fire of the Love of God and of Things Eternal ; but rather calculated totally to suppress and extinguish the same. And yet these Foolish and Pernicious Trifles shall be published by blind Critics for *Sacred Dogma's*, Observations and Annotations, and shall be received as such by many others, blind like themselves, at the same time that they shall forsake and deride the true way of knowing Divine Things, Divine Illumination and Divine Faith, or the Oblation and Surrender of our Faculties, our Understanding, Will, Heart, and all our inward Powers, to God, and the true and inward Light, that he may shine upon them, and bestow and communicate to them the Light of

Truth and Wisdom, whereof he is the only Fountain.

Thus has *Parvadius* here in an ample, and as I may say sensible manner, *Poiret's* Sentiments upon CRITICISM, whether *blind* or *clear-sighted*, and how far he despises the one and esteems the other; whence it will appear whether by despising Mr. *Le Clerc's* Criticism, or even by having an infinite abhorrence of the same, it may be said simply and without any restriction that I *despise Criticism*, and that I *will not bestow any Pains upon it*.

Applied to Mr.  
Le Clerc's  
Criticism.

For seeing that upon Reading many of Mr. *Le Clerc's* Works, Critical, Philosophical, Theological, and Philological, I clearly saw and observed every where such Things as I have just now mentioned of blind Criticism, to be contained and scattered in them, I think my self obliged to declare, that I look upon his as a most flagrant Instance of BLIND CRITICISM, and even almost for an Original of it. And if I might be allowed to define it, I should say that 'tis a *Blind and Impious boldness of subjecting all Things, even the most Sacred and Divine, to blind groping in the Dark, of cavilling in a most unworthy manner upon them, and of exposing to Sale the dead and mangled Letter in the room of the living Substance it self, so that instead of the solid and Christian Religion of the Word Incarnate by whose Spirit we may return to the Father, it supplies us only with a certain Superficial, Historical and Critico-Philosophical Religion of Self-Love, which leads its Followers to Eternal Perdition.*

A Definition  
or Description  
thereof.

It would be very troublesome as well as superfluous after those Instances which I have produced in the foregoing Letter, and in these Considerations and Remarks upon his Censure, to collect all the innumerable Passages in his Works, which confirm this Definition. Even his late Exposition of the New Testament alone in *French*, with Critical Notes is such, that no honest Man can without Tears see how he mangles and wholly enervates those places of the Divine Oracles, which discover and assert the great Corruption of our Nature, as well original as inherent, and all the Streams that flow from thence; the Corruption of Human Reason; the weakness and depravity of Human Strength; the necessity of the Illumination of the Spirit of God (all whose Operations our Author restrains to the miraculous Gifts bestowed on the Apostles of the Primitive Church) to the Knowledge of Things



Things Divine ; the necessity of having the same Spirit in us, and of his presence to purify and sanctify us from Sin ; and in general all the Operations, Revelations, Motions and Government thereof in us ; as also the Misteries of the Blessed Trinity and the Divinity of our Saviour, and Righteousness and Justification far exceeding all External and Pharisaical Probity, &c. In Expounding of all which he has made so good an use of that blessed Art of his, that he could scarce do the *Pelagians* and *Socinians* a greater Service, than by exhibiting the Samples that he has there and elsewhere given us of his Ingenuity that way.

And to make it appear besides these Reasons, Witsius's that I am not prejudiced against that sort of Criticism, I shall take the liberty to add the Opinion of a very Learned Person, one well known for his Candor and Temper among the Dutch Divines, the famous Witsius, whose Moderation and Equity even Parrhasius himself is forced to commend, with Relation to the same matter. He among many other Things (which take up about Fifty Pages of his Sacred Miscellanies) which he has said against the rash Attempts of Mr. Le Clerc's Criticism, could not forbear ever and anon to break out into such Words as these.

(a) *Woe to that bold and rash Criticism, which presumes to prefer its own Conjectures, as it owns itself, to the Authority of the Apostles, and consequently of Christ himself. — For what a Madness is this !* And observing that our Critick refers the LXIX and CIX Psalms not to the Spirit of God, but to the corrupt Affections of Nature, he (b) says: I cannot, nor indeed ought I to dissemble it, but that to me these Things seem very Injurious to David, the Psalms of David, the Spirit of God by whom David writ his Psalms, and finally to Christ himself and his Apostles, who had a very different Opinion of these Psalms of David. And after he has more fully proved these Things, and added some Apostolical Testimonies, he goes on thus, (c) *He most impiously doubts whether David was the Author of those Psalms.*

—What Name shall I give to this Doubt ? Shall I call it supine Ignorance ? Or an inexcusable and rash itch of Disputing ? or the Prophane and Impious Inclination of a bold Mind to make a noise against the Apostles ? Let not that Divine think that this Charge of Impiety against him proceeds from ill-grounded Anger. None that

speaks for God and his Word should be frightened from acting seriously, and from calling every thing by its proper Name. — The Apostles witness that they are David's Psalms : They quote them as a Part of the Scripture. Peter also in a premeditated Discourse declares, That the Holy Ghost spoke so by the Mouth of David. And here we see a CRITICAL Divine arisen that openly maintains that those Psalms are not from the Spirit of Meekness, but rather the dismal Songs of a Mind agitated with vehement Anger, and burning with an insatiable desire of Revenge, otherwise than the Gospel of Christ Commands. Let Modesty itself speak, and even the most indulgent Tolleration, which the Remonstrants challenge as peculiar to their Sect, by what Name, if we have not yet lost the true Names of Things, we must call such perverseness : That when Peter says, The Holy Ghost spoke by the Mouth of David, any CRITICK should mutter, I doubt whether he spoke to David ; I know not to whom ; not the Holy Ghost, but the Spirit of Anger and Revenge, which is contrary to the Law and the Gospel, Dictated those Words. I cannot but be astonished at so great IMPIETY. A little after, this Excellent Person having shewn the Excellency of the Canticles, which our Critick Rejects and Compares to Ovid's Song of Poliphemus the Gyant, and having premised this Postulate, (a) What is it to turn the most Sacred Things into ridicule and to set them on a level with the most profane and absurd Stories of the Heathens, if this be not ? He subjoins : (b) Let it be observed, I pray, how great a part of the Divine Volumes he cuts off by this CRITICAL Scith. If we believe him, all the SACRED HISTORIES were written without any Inspiration. Some PSALMS, that are called David's, proceed rather from Anger and a Desire of Revenge, than from the Spirit of God. In the PROVERBS of Solomon there are many vulgar Things, than which a CRITICK without any Inspiration, might easily have spoken better. The SONG of SONGS has nothing Mystical in it ; but is like unto the Rustick and Gyantick Song of Poliphemus. Now should we go on thus, how very little at last would there be left Divine ? O Miserable Church, that has hitherto kept and embraced and prized Writings of so little value as such a precious Treasure ! or rather, O BOLD and IMPIOUS CRITICISM that assumes such a Right to thy self over Divine Matters, and endeavours so WICKEDLY to destroy the Foundations of our Faith !

(a) Ibid. p.  
228.

(b) Ibid. p.  
230.

*Faith!* The same Celebrated Divine, after having spent almost all the XXII. Chapter in Refuting the (a) Cavils of our CRITICK about the matter of the Inspiration of the Apostles, whereby the perverse subtilty of Human Wit impiously mutters against God; and having likewise observed (b) That he takes that way of Commenting which the Socinians above others follow, He concludes, (c) I protest that I have a due esteem for his Learning and Sense; but many of his Opinions, dispersed through all the Books that he has published, and which plainly savour of Arianism, Pelagianism and Libertinism, I utterly abhor and detest, as they deserve: Finally, I neither Covet his Praises, nor am I in any Concern for his Anger. I only ask one favour of the Reader, not to Judge of my Books by the short Sketches and Censures of the BIBLIOTHEQUE (See here what Credit ought to be given to them) unless the matter be of no great Moment in itself.

(a) Ibid. p. 330.

(b) p. 333.

(c) p. 345.

The same Person in the Second Tome of his Miscellanies, having a Dissertation about Lot's Wife being turned into a Pillar of Salt, speaks as follows of Mr. Le Clerc, who endeavours to weaken the belief of that Fact, by wresting the Sacred Text to make it Truckle to Criticism and his own Reason:

(d) Mr. Le Clerc has stopt a great way on this side of the Limits of Obsequious Faith, Indulging too much the Ratiocinations of his own Wanton Fancy. And then citing these words of Mr. Le Clerc: Therefore a WRESTED Interpretation would be more tollerable, than the SUPPOSAL of a Miraculous Event for the sake of Expounding two little Words: He adds, What Perverseness does there at last appear here? The Ancient Prophets were wholly employed in Extolling the wonderful Works of God, which was the Result of their Piety; and yet we think 'tis an Evidence of our Wisdom to disparage Miracles, and to use all imaginable Artifices to Expunge them out of the Christian Belief? Even by this Example we may learn what it is to make that proud REASON the Interpreter of Scripture, which had rather WREST it, provided it be done with some quickness of Wit. than be thought to speak what Reason cannot deduce from its own Principles. This indeed is the same thing, as first for the sake of Reason to proclaim War against the Scripture, and then against Reason itself in expounding the Scripture. — Who can without Indignation Read such great BOLDNESS of Interpreters, in perverting the plain Words of Authors? — Finally, What is it that Reason

(d) Tom. II.  
Exerc. VII.  
§. 17, 19,  
20, 21, 23.



son is so much afraid of? That God works Wonders? What part of the World do we now live in? Do we hear such things in the midst of Christendom, which even the Gentile World would be ashamed of? Is it repugnant to Reason for the Omnipotent and Infinite God to do those Things? ——— Nothing should appear so incredible to us in this Sacred History, as to oblige us to do Violence to the plain Words by a Paradoxical Exposition; and yet this is what Mr. Le Clerc does, omitting no word, which he does not unjustly mangle or carp at. ——— Surely, 'tis a great wickedness to pretend I know not what probability, against the clear and plain Narration of the Sacred History.

The same worthy Person published also in the same Tome, a Year after the *Parrhasiana* were published, an Oration which he had pronounced in publick the Year before the *Parrhasiana* came out, wherein he again briefly repeats the above-mention'd sad and just Complaints. Take here one or two Sentences thereof. (a) "The Sect of CRITICKS is a BOLD sort of Men, most presumptuously imagining that they may Treat all Men and Things as they please. There is nothing either profane or sacred that escapes the Violence of their hands. There is nothing so small or low that they think below their Care, spending whole Days in useless Niceties about Words and the Accents of Letters. On the other side there is nothing so great and high which they would not subject to their Pedagogical Determination. After they have satiated their Ambitious Desires in mangling (or as they call it correcting) the Writings of Prophane Authors, with the same confidence they take upon them to Judge of the Abstrusest Books of Holy Scripture; and by adding, taking away and transposing, they guess and guess again according to their Pleasures; depending solely upon the boldness of Conjecture; but yet with such a confidence in their Art, that they make as bold with Moses and David, and Peter and Paul, as they do with Polybius and Livy, and Aristophanes and Plautus." What an unworthy and insufferable Reproach is this upon Heavenly Men! who being moved by the Holy Spirit plainly discover that they were Inspired, and speak above the Rate of Man, and by their own Majesty easily vindicate themselves from all the Pedantick Marks and Characteristicks of Bold Censurers. ——— But I wish it had kept within

(a) Miscel.  
Tom. II. p.  
246, &c.

within these bounds. The Contagion has spread itself further than to be content with Metamorphosing some Words or Sentences. It attacks whole Odes (Psalms) and whole (a) Books; and having cruelly stabbed them with a (a) Job, Pro-CRITICAL Weapon, it in a Magisterial Manner verbs, Eccle-hast. Cantic. dashes them out of the List of the Divine Volumes; and that nothing might be wanted to compleat the IMPIETY, it compares the Mystical Songs, whereby the pure and inconceivable Love between Christ and his Church are most elegantly expressed, with the Impure and Heathenish Songs of Polyphemus to the Nymph Galatea. I perceive, my Friends, that ye are astonished. Ye can scarce believe me; ye can scarce believe your own Ears. It cannot but appear infinitely surprizing, and even almost incredible to you, that there should ever any where be such Monsters in Nature, as to pretend to Wisdom and to profess the Christian Religion, and at the same time to belch out such injurious Reflexions against the Holy Oracles of God! but yet indeed, my Friends, and you may believe me, such there are, what I have told you is true, and is only but a Sample of a great deal more of the same kind. Nor are such things whispered only, as possibly you might suspect, and talked of privately and in corners among those that are initiated into the Party, and Confederates in the same wicked Principles; but they are boasted of in publick, they are printed and exposed to publick Sale, they are in every ones hands, and what Crowns the IMPIETY, they are looked upon as an Argument of Uncommon Wisdom and Learning. O Seculum! O Mores! Parrhasius might have seen these Things even before he writ his Parrhasiana, for they were published a Part the Year before; and yet notwithstanding he continues blindly to extol his own Criticism, to despise those that do not apply themselves to the Study thereof, and to praise those that favour his Sentiments.

And this is the Reason that whenever Parrhasius, or Mr. Le Clerc highly commends any Books or Critical Authors, as great and incomparable Expounders of the Scriptures, to whom he is indebted for many Things, and whose Notions are generally agreeable to his Taste, I cannot but entertain some Suspicion of them as well as of himself. Indeed if what those Criticks have published upon the Holy Scriptures, be communicated with that Modesty that becomes them as certain accessory Exercises, as certain external Grammatical and Rational Annotations upon the Words and External surfaces of Things,

Mr. LeClerc's commendations of a Critick, give cause to suspect him.

they ought to be born with, and even deserve to be esteemed in their Degree: For he that Sells and Recommends any thing only according to its Intrinsick Value and Nature, ought not to be despised nor blamed; for in this case he deceives no Body, and such Wares of his may be of use in their kind. But should any one pretend to sell Chaff for Cedars, and Luppins not only for Brasses but for Gold or Pearls; or if those Critical Authors have put up and sold their own Conjectures and Criticisms for the Substance and Light itself of the Divine and Salutary Sense of the Scriptures, and of the Essential Things intended by the Scriptures, and recommended to us in order to our Salvation; then indeed whosoever will candidly examine such Critical Volumes, and weigh them in the true Ballance of solid and substantial Things themselves, will clearly see that in that respect they are nothing but Chaff and meer Trash, and altogether unworthy of being read or considered by any one that knows that he ought to employ the short space of his Life in seeking Things Eternal, and in loving God with all his Heart, with all his Soul, with all his Mind and with all his Faculties, as also in removing the Obstacles that may hinder the same. And whatsoever does not tend to this, and yet goes under the Name of Good Profound and Incomparable Expositions of Scripture (whereof this is the Epitome and the only Scope) are rather meer Trifles and Impertinencies of no value at all.

And to illustrate the matter the better by Examples, examine, if you please, some of those Authors and Books upon the Scriptures, which Mr. *Le Clerc* so highly commends as the Principal, as the best, and as incomparable, and compare their boasted and imaginary incomparability (if I may so speak) with the real Incomparability of those Things, *v.g.* that we have yet remaining in the Homilies, Treatises, Books or Tomes of that incomparable Person (whom *Erasmus* so highly praises, and whom yet Mr. *Le Clerc* in more than one place despises) *ORIGEN*, upon the Holy Scriptures; and then, if you are not strangely prejudiced, you will soon discover what is Counterfeit and what is Real, and also the Difference between those Interpreters who are guided by blind Criticism only, and those who being hated by them, are made conspicuous by the Experience and Possession



sion itself of Divine Things. Together with *Origen*, the same *Erasmus* also, who must be allowed to have been something of a Critick, reckons *St. Austin* (to whom likewise *Mr. Le Clerc* has a great Aversion) and yet of this Person *Mr. Le Clerc* speaks thus in his Art of Criticism: (a) *We so much esteem Erasmus, that we think few of the Ancients equal, much less exceed him*: To the Ancients he might also have added many of the Moderns, and even himself too, without any Injury to the Truth.

Finally, In order to obviate an Objection, (which *Mr. Le Clerc* often urges) which *Parrhasius* might start afresh, as if by despising and rejecting his Criticism, the chief means and Instrument of Interpreting the Scriptures would by that means be destroyed, especially if we also reject the Assistance of Reason; it will not be amiss, besides what we have said upon this Subject in other (b) Places, to shew here how the meaning intended by God in the Scriptures may be discovered and possessed by every one, as far as is necessary to his Salvation and to please God, without having recourse to the helps and assistances of Criticism and corrupt Reason.

(a) Art. Crit. Vol. II. p. 485.

(b) de Erud. lib. 1. § 38. lib. 2. § 53, to 58. lib. 3. § 70, 73, 76. and Oecon. Divin. Vol. 3. c. 14.

# A DISSERTATION Upon the manner of EXPOUNDING THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

I. E must in the first Place know and Treasure it up in our Hearts; that the Case is quite otherwise as to the Holy Scriptures, and the Sense and Exposition thereof, than with the Books of other Authors, and with their Sense and Exposition.

II. The Authors of other Books (in so far as they are not enlightened by God and endued with his

I. *How without Criticism we may discover the true meaning of the Holy Scriptures.*

II. *That human and divine Books differ as to their Exposition. The difference Threesfold. Spirit)*

*differ as to their Exposition. The difference Threesfold.*

Spirit) neither have nor pretend to impart to us other Senses, Meanings or Thoughts, but such as are agreeable to Nature and Corrupt Reason, and which do not exceed the comprehension and Powers thereof. Besides they are either dead themselves, or they are absent from us, so that we cannot consult them upon any Difficulty; their Volumes lie there as dead Things. But supposing that even the Authors themselves were or could be present with us, yet they are by Nature extremely weak; they would not be able to remove the Clouds, the Dullness, the Ineptitude, and the crazy Disposition of our Understanding, by imprinting clearly and distinctly the Objects themselves, or their Ideas upon it, and by moulding and putting the same into a fit capacity to receive such Impressions.

(a) Isa. 55.  
8, 9.

But God the Author of the Holy Scriptures (a) Thinks and Speaks Things Supernatural; and his Design is to raise our Minds above the Power of corrupt Nature, and to make them Divine and like unto himself. Then he lives for ever, and is always present, he is present with all Men, we move, live and have our being in him, and none can flee and hide himself from his Spirit. Then again, he is infinitely Powerful over all his Creatures, and consequently over the Intellectual Faculties of Man: He is the most Omnipotent Light and Intelligence, and out of his own good Pleasure the most communicable of himself, and of his own Mind.

III. That  
God can easily  
communicate  
the Sense of  
the Scriptures.  
IV. Two Re-  
quisites on the  
Part of Man,  
to offer up the  
proper Facul-  
ties, and to  
have them fitly  
disposed.

III. And hence it follows that God can easily communicate his Mind, Meaning or Intention to Men, and that either by the Intervention of Words or Letters, or even without them.

IV. But in order to the actual Performance of this, there are two Things at least required on Man's Part: First, That he offer up to God those Vessels or Faculties which God has given him for that purpose; namely his Understanding, his Heart and Affections, and in one word, the inward Man; and then that they be in a fit Condition to receive the Communication of God.

V. Now they will be in a fit Condition, if, so far as relates to a sincere Desire, and to the pure Intention of a good Heart, they have the same end, scope and mark with God and with his Light and Operations in Man. Now this end and scope common to both (God and Man) is nothing but the

LOVE

LOVE of GOD and of our NEIGHBOUR, which is the end and scope of all the Law of God, of all the Prophets, and of all the Scripture, or to use St. Paul's Words, *(b) The end of the Commandment is Charity, out of a pure Heart, and a good Conscience, and Faith-unfeigned* : That is, the end that God had, and which he proposed to Men when he gave them his Commandments and the Scriptures, is, that Man should propose it as his sole Aim to Love God and his Neighbour, out of a Heart purged of every other Affection and Design, and from an Intention of rendering to both their due, according to the Convictions of his own Mind ; and also by committing himself and all his inward Faculties with full Confidence and Persuasion to God himself, and to his Promises and Revealed Truth.

*(b) 1 Tim. 1. 5.*

VI. Whosoever therefore has and reads the Holy Scriptures with the same end, scope and design that they were written in, and by reading them seeks to acquire to himself, or to increase in himself, Charity out of a pure Heart, and a good Conscience and Faith unfeigned ; and to that end and without Dissimulation offers himself, his Understanding and all his inward Faculties to the living God, who is intimately present within him, and in whom he lives and has his Being, who is Omnipotent Light itself, who is immense Goodness itself, and who is infinitely more desirous of Communicating himself and his Operations to Men than they themselves can be ; 'Tis impossible but that God will afford such a Man Light and Grace sufficient to understand the Scriptures for his own Salvation ; but 'tis God that opens and moves his Heart, and that enlightens and transforms his Understanding, whereupon he sees and feels the Mind and Sense of God in the Scriptures, after a saving, living, moving and infallible manner ; and in that State he may also without any danger of Error ascribe that Sense to the Scripture, or to that Part thereof which he then reads, whereby he shall perceive that his Heart is more and more pushed forward and assisted to disentangle itself from cleaving to perishable Creatures. whereby the Love of God and of his Neighbour may be advanced, and his Conscience quieted, and whereby he shall find that his Faith, or the faithful Surrender of himself and all his Faculties, to God, to his Word and Promises, and especially to the Mysteries which he does not yet understand,

VI. *The Application to the matter in hand. The Exposition of the Scriptures.*



Pfal. 16. 8.

Pfal. 73. 23.

VII. *The Principal Objections of the Critics.*

derstand, grows daily more and more Perfect and Compleat: In which course as he grows daily more Faithful, so will he also more and more discover every where in the Scriptures, most admirable Means and Motives of growing and improving in Knowledge, in Love, and in the praise of God, and in every good Thing, and seeing God is always in his sight, and at his right hand, he shall not therefore be moved, or he shall not fall into any dangerous Error: But God will hold him by the Right hand. He will guide him with his Counsel, and after that receive him into Glory.

VII. You'll say, but there are so many Equivocal Things in Scripture: Many difficult and occult Circumstances of Things, Actions, Places and Times: Many obscure Mysteries and Prophecies: Now may not those you now describe, either be at a loss to find out any meaning to them, or may they not ascribe to them false and incongruous Meanings? and to avoid this inconvenience is it not very necessary to Study Languages, Philosophy, Criticism and History, and the like, without which you will not be able to understand any of these Things above-mentioned? Lo this is the vain Pretence, wherein they that Glory in Criticism, and that even in the blind and imaginary part thereof, ground the absolute Necessity of their Critical Idol, to which afterwards they Sacrifice all their Desires, and the far greater Part, if not all their whole Life, postponing and forgetting the end, the scope and design of God and of the Scriptures, which, being puffed up with the vain and empty froth of human Learning, they deride and laugh at in those who possess or endeavour to acquire the same, or that highly esteem it!

VIII. *How we are to answer such Persons from St. Paul. 1 Tim. 1. 4. &c.*

VIII. But even in the Days of St. Paul such Persons there were also, who having a Mind to be esteemed Teachers of the Law, raised Difficulties upon the Law and the Scriptures about Genealogies, and the like, which Minister Questions, rather than edify, which is in Faith. But what says the Apostle of these Things? does he advise them to apply themselves more closely to the Study of Criticism, and to all sorts of other Authors and curious Arts, that thereby they might be enabled to compose and boast of large Volumes about the Genealogies of the Scripture, and about the Divisions and Dispersions of the Tribes and Families of the Jews, to hold long Disputes on both

both sides, to support that that is more probable with Critical Arguments, to refute the other side that carries less probability with it, and to put off all these Things for sacred Dissertations, and for specimens of sacred Criticism? so far is he from advising any one to these Things, or to think of them, or the like, that on the contrary, he rather earnestly desires and admonishes two *Men of God*, Timothy and Titus, Pastors and Doctors of the Flock of Christ, *not to mind such things themselves*, and to charge others to shun them; to avoid such foolish and ridiculous Fables, endless Genealogies, and foolish Questions, and Contentions and Strivings about the Law; because they are unprofitable and vain; and because they proceed from this, that such Persons having a Mind to be Teachers of the Law, and being desirous to be esteemed learned and well skilled in the Scriptures, erred and fell away from the only true and solid end of the Commandment, from studying and seeking Charity, out of a pure Heart, and a good Conscience, and Faith unfeigned: Whence they could not but fall away and turn to vain Jangling: In which they neither understand what they say, nor what they affirm; because their Criticism is blind, not seeing the things themselves, nor the scope and end, or the true Substance of all things contained under them; knowing that a *Servant of the Lord* must not contend about those things, or busy himself about them, but give himself up to the Practice of Piety, which has the Promise of this Life and of that which is to come; and propose sound Doctrine to others, that they may be instructed and wholly employed therein, because that the infinite Goodness and Mercy of God our Saviour has appeared, that according to his Mercy he might save us by washing and purifying us from all our vain and evil Affections by the Regeneration and Renovation of the Holy Spirit poured out abundantly upon us, and to be yet still more poured out by JESUS CHRIST our Saviour, that we may live in Holiness and Righteousness before God all the Days of our Life, and be led by the same Spirit into all Salutory Truth, and at last be made *Heirs* according to the Hope of Eternal Life. This is a faithful saying, and ought to be esteemed; that it behoves Men to be assured of these things; that they ought to be inculcated and maintained; that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good Works. These Exercises and Studies are truly Profitable unto Men; and not those

2 Tim. 2. 23.

Tit. 3. 9.

Luke 1.

foolish *Questions and Contentions* about the Law and Letter of the Scripture. That *the Law* and the Scripture, if rightly used, is good, and both to the good and the wicked; to the Just and Good they are indeed good in their end and in their Design, wherein they may also Exercise themselves, and improve and continue and glory; but not so in the Letter of the Law, which is not given to the *Just* (to him that has the Just and Holy Spirit of Christ, and the end of the Law) that he should weary himself in the Letter of the Law, and in light and trivial Questions about it: But as to the ungodly and *unwighteous*, who do not possess the spirit, the scope and the end of the Law, with respect to them the Law is good, if one make use of it in order to curb and restrain their sins, and every thing that opposes sound and sanctifying Doctrine. Besides these two uses of the Law and the Scripture; that is, besides seeking after and partaking of the End, the Scope, and the Spirit itself, and besides the Application of the Letter to curb the Sins of Wicked Men, *if any one teach any Thing else*, either as necessary or as a part of the Scripture, or as the Key thereof (as 'tis pretended Criticism is) *and does not acquiesce in the wholesome Words of our Lord Jesus Christ, he is Proud and puffed up with Wind, knowing nothing solidly, but doatings about Questions and strifes of words* (about which Criticism is wholly taken up) *whereof cometh Envy, Strife, Blasphemies, Evil Surmising, Perverse disputings of Men of corrupt Minds* (whose Understanding, Reason, and every Thing, are Corrupt) *and who are destitute of the real and solid Truth, and consequently are most prone both to fall themselves and to lead others into all sorts of Wicked Heresies, and that by the just Judgment of God, which in such a manner Revenges the Rejection and Contempt of the salutary Truth which is in and of his Spirit, and permits them to be carried away with the strong Delusion of Error, that they should believe a Lye, because they received not the Love of the Truth, that they might be Saved.* And of this Divine and formidable Judgment we need not go far to seek Examples.

1 Tim. 6. 3,  
Etc.

2 Thess. 2. 10.

IX. Other  
Answers to the  
Objections of  
the Critics.

IX. Those Things are what may be returned in Answer to the above-mentioned Objections from the Apostolical Doctrine; nor is there any Thing else contradicting this in other Places of the Scripture relating to them. But as a further Answer to such Objections we shall also add the following Observations,  
That



That the General Knowledge of Things and Actions, according as a Good and Honest Mind can gather it from the bare reading of the Scriptures, is sufficient to direct any one to the Spirit, to the scope and end of the Scripture, and to Eternal Salvation. That none can approach to God, or become acceptable to him, or attain Salvation by the most Accurate and most Critical Consideration and Discussion of Things, Actions, Places, Times and other Circumstances, as is evident in the Devil, who either knows such Things, or may know them, and from many Wicked Men among the Learned: On the contrary, such Things rather draw away Men's Minds from God and from Salvation, by Reason of the Pride which they fill their Hearts with, and of other Evil Fruits, and the loss of that precious Time which they ought to employ in working out their own Salvation. That these Things however ought not to be condemned, if any one that has made a Progress in the Study of Criticism and other Sciences already, apply them afterwards to the Letter of the Scripture, provided he rate them according to their real Worth, and no more; provided he do not recommend them as necessary, as solid, as the Key of the Scriptures, and as Things that justly challenge all our Time and Application; but only as certain lesser and accessory Exercises, upon which we ought to spend but little Time and Study; and that with this Intention only, that from such Types and Shadows, as I may say, the Mind may be raised and excited to the Contemplation of Things more Spiritual and Cælestial.

That as to *Mysteries*, we cannot by any Human Art or Study arrive at the Knowledge and Explication of them, but only by the Illumination and Communication of the Spirit of Divine Wisdom. That every one ought not to aspire to the Knowledge of such Things neither; but only those that are of a pure Mind, and that are moved by the Spirit to ask such Knowledge of God, that so their Prayers being acceptable to God, he may hear them; yea, that 'tis not necessary for every one even in the plainest manner to read or understand all the Scriptures; but such Things only of them as suffice to direct them to the scope of the Law and the Scriptures, and such as enable them to obtain the same, namely, the Spirit of *Jesus Christ*, that it may live, and rule, and govern in them as it did in the Son of God whilst he lived

upon Earth. Finally, if God should require of any one more and more particular Things about the Scriptures, we must wait for his Direction in the Matter, they must be given us by the Spirit, as well as the scope, and the end, and the quickening Substance, and the salutary Sense and Interpretation of the Scriptures themselves, which God will have all Men to ask only of himself, and which he is always exceedingly delighted to give, and makes it the chief Business that he has with Men, to Communicate with Vessels duely prepared, or that offer themselves up to him in Sincerity : And to aspire after this, to give place to this Spirit within us, and to cherish the same, should be our principal and only Business and Care.

X. *Other Objections, as that this is Vulgar, Languid, and that God does not desire it.*

X. But possibly some may think, that this is the Business of low and vulgar Minds ; that it is suitable enough to the rustick and unlearned part of Men, to confine themselves to that Sense only of the Scriptures, which God expects and requires ; but that all this is beneath Men of Learning, and such as would be thought to know more than Ordinary : That that is a *Languid* Exercise ; an Insipid sort of Food to a Learned Mind ; that all Things are *Frigid* there (even as they call all *Allegorical* and *Spiritual Interpretations Frigid* :) And that possibly God neither *Delights* in such a Thing, nor desires nor will communicate such extraordinary Beams and Effects of his Light to Men, but very rarely, as is sufficiently evident from the few Instances that we have of that kind.

XI. *Answer. The Occupations of the Critics are rather vile and frigid.*

XI. O the deplorable blindness and stupidity of Mankind, and especially of such Learned Men ! But if any Thing be truly low and contemptible ; if any Thing deserves to be called Languid, Frigid and Insipid, what can be more so, than for an Immortal Mind, made for an Infinite Good and all the chati Pleasures thereof to be employed and taken up about knots of Straws, and the empty shadows not of Things only, but even of Words for the most part ; in canvassing whereof, Men so consume their Strength, and wrack their Brains, that if the Enemy and Deceiver of Souls had not first bewitched them with the Counterfeit appearances of Pleasure in them, a Man in his right Senses could not so much as have Thought of them ? When on the other side, 'tis the most desirable employment and the Heavenly Pleasure of the most High God to search out for and to find Men of such Hearts and Understandings, as are willing to be struck and penetra-

penetrated with the Rays of his Divine Light, and with the true, lively and hidden Sense of the admirable Things shadowed out in Scripture.

XII. Therefore, as a great Sportsman that seeks about and looks out sharp for his Prey, watches until it peep out of its Den or lurking place, and then takes that opportunity to shoot at it, and take it and carry it off; even so that incomparable and incredible Lover of Men, that most ardent hunter of Souls, God, \* looks down continually from Heaven upon the Children of Men, to see if any one seeks God, and his Eyes behold and observe the Nations: And if he sees any one come out of the lurking Places of his own Errors, Frauds and Wickednesses, out of his vain and Earthly Cares, Occupations, Studies and Distractions, and to turn his Soul without Dissimulation to its Creator, who made it to be his own peculiar and eternal Prey (as I may say) to be the Receptacle of his Light and Love, he thereupon strikes it with a dart or ray of his Light, and of the Supernatural Words and Inspirations of his Eternal Word, and penetrates it after so lively a manner, that immediately he begins to see and relish Things Eternal and Divine, and that also even altho' he had never seen nor read any Scripture before, as was the case of many before the Scripture was Written. But if such a Person has read the Scriptures before, and has been accustomed to them, then in that case the lover and observer of Souls uses often to convey and cloath the Darts of his Light and Holy Inspirations under the cover, as I may say, of the Words of Scripture, which however he darts so powerfully into the Heart and the Mind of his Creature, that it feels its Heart to be very sensibly touched and wounded with the Love of its Creator, and its Mind to be admirably affected and illuminated with the Knowledge of Things Eternal and Invisible.

XIII. And then such a Person lays aside all the nauseous Trifles of the Earth, all the vain Toys and silly Fancies of Men, and all his foolish and distracting Studies about Niceties, to mind him by whom he is touched, affected, and as I may say wounded, and to listen to his loving touch and luminous Irradiation: And then he begins to be able to distinguish aright between the Literal, Grammatical, Critical, Ideal and Philosophical Sense of the Scripture which he had before, and which (setting aside the Opera-

XII. *This Explained by a Comparison, how God takes Pleasure in striking and penetrating Men's Minds with the Beams of his Truth, &c.*

\* Psalm 14.  
2. and 66, 7.

XIII. *The Comparison continued. How a Man laying aside Trifles, asks the living sense of God and of his Words.*



John 6.

tion of God ) appears now to him to be Frigid, Dead and merely Superficial; and between the Spiritual Sense thereof, which is the Mind itself, the Light and the Illustration of the Spirit of God, a Serene, savory, penetrating, lively and quickening Understanding, changing and converting the Soul, wholly towards God, and to eternal and solid Objects: He observes that when he read the Scriptures before as a Grammarian, Critick and Philosopher, the Sense that he gathered from it proceeded from the Activity and Industry of his own natural and corrupt Faculties, whence he drew nothing but Superficial, Frigid and Insipid Ideas, which again ministred occasion to Pride, and Flattery, and Contentions, and were the cause of Errors and Heresies, contrary to the end and design, and consequently against the true Sense of the Scriptures: That the last and divine Sense, which he finds concealed under the Words of the Scripture, and which is that whereof *Christ* speaks, *The Words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are Life*, is not in his Power, for as much as that tho' he read the Scriptures before with all possible Care, and had all the helps that his own Reason or Criticism could afford him, yet he could never have found out such a Sense of himself. Therefore desiring afterwards to acquire the lively, solid and divine Sense of the Scriptures, which he now sees comes from God alone; he now takes another way to acquire it, he alters his way of Studying; namely, he humbles himself before his Creator, he acknowledges his Impotence and Blindness, yea, and his unworthiness to receive the Divine Light, and to have his Understanding illuminated thereby by reason of his Innumerable Sins, and the abuse of all his Faculties throughout the former part of his Life: And he beseeches God that out of his Infinite Mercy he would open his Eyes that he may see the wonders of his Law, and that he would send forth his Light and Truth, or the Spirit of Truth which is in the Eternal Word that was made Flesh, that he may dwell in us, and speak in us, *Words that are Spirit and Life*, and Reveal and make known to us the Father, and Himself, and the Mind and Sense of his Spirit, according to his Promises which we can never be deceived in. And then God, who does not despise a Contrite and Humble Heart, who is Faithful, Good and Powerful, knows how to keep his Promise to those that fear him, and is Rich to all that call upon him, and who stands

stands in no need of Criticism, Logick or Philosophy, to illuminate, quicken and renew his own Creature; but only of Humility of Heart, and of his Resignation and a Passive-offering up his Understanding to him, whereupon he shines upon it, and discovers himself and all his Divine Truths therein, and consequently the true and living Meanings and Objects of the Scriptures, first indeed, so far as is necessary to the salutary Progress of the Soul in God, and then also (according as God thinks fit) more abundantly, so that the Soul is enabled to take delight in the Infinite variety of the wonders of God, and from them to take occasion to adore and celebrate God with Eternal Praises: For she sees that her Understandings and the Lights, and Objects, and Wonders of God, are Infinitely enlarged, that the Word and Commandment of God is exceeding broad: That the Riches and Treasures that are discovered in *Christ* (the Object, the end and the scope of the Scripture) are such, that 'twas not without Reason that *St. Paul*, said *I count all Things but Loss, yea, and Dung, for the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord*; for as much as that in the Knowledge of him and of the Father by the Holy Spirit, is Life Eternal, and consequently luminous, Infinite and Eternal Pleasures.

Psalm 119.

96.

Phil. 3. 8.

John 17. 3.

XIV. See here how the Sense of God in the Scriptures may be very solidly and safely obtained by any one without that Counterfeit Key of the Criticks and Philosophers. But if moreover God think fit to make use of such a Person as a Labourer in his Vineyard, and to set him over others to instruct them in the solid and salutary Knowledge of the Divine ways, and of the Scriptures, he out of the Treasures of his Wisdom and Love bestows upon him besides some more special Gifts according to the Degree and Proportions of Lights which God has determined to communicate to Men of those Ages; and also such a measure of Divine Wisdom as may enable him to suit his Words and Discoveries to the several Capacities, Conditions and Circumstances of those that he has to do with. And indeed such a one may very justly be esteemed and commended as a true Interpreter of the Scriptures and of the Mind of God, who if possibly he had before any skill in Humane Learning, in the Languages or in Philosophical and Critical Knowledge, he may very well use them as adventitious ornaments and helps, the better to accommodate himself to others, and to

XIV. And how he may be also enabled to explain the same to others.

win them over to the Truth ; but which nevertheless he esteems as nothing in Comparison of internal, divine and solid Things, and of the Vertues and Operations of *Christ* and his Spirit, which include all the Substance, the end and scope, and the strength and sense of all the Scriptures, and which comprehend the whole of the matter, and which bring the Souls of Men safely home to the Haven of Happiness ; in propagating whereof, he will therefore without so much minding other lesser Matters, wholly employ and busy himself.

XV. *St. Austin was so qualified, otherwise than his Adversary, Mr. Le Clerc would suggest.*

XV. This Description, as to the main thereof, I have formed from what *St. Austin*, the most conspicuous of all the Fathers for his Humility, Charity and Sanctity, mentions of himself in his *Confessions*, wherein as that Man of God shews in a very lively manner how he was Converted to God much after the way and manner aforesaid by the Holy Scriptures, and how he had the lively and solid Sense thereof conveyed and communicated to him through Divine Light and Love ; so also does he shew how afterwards, as to the scope, and salutary end of the Word of God, he became a solid Interpreter of the Substance of the Holy Scriptures, whatever *Mr. Le Clerc*, or his counterfeit Representative, can say to the contrary. We have shewn the true cause of their spite against this Good Man above : The pretence is, that he was not besotted to their Blind Criticism. But 'tis time, after this Dissertation, as useful and necessary as its long, to return to the Censure itself.

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## The Remarks on Parrhasius's Censure continued.

(25.) *HERE* Parrhasius acknowledges The Severity of his Censure, but he says, *That I have justly brought it upon my self, and that I cannot deny as much.* Empty Words, as are all the rest ! I both can and do deny it, and have more than sufficiently shewn the Injustice thereof. Parrhasius will one Day taste of his own Severity, when he must give an account

(25.) Of the Severity of Parrhasius's Censure; and his several ways of Answering.



count of all his unjust Reproaches before the Impartial Judge of all Men. I do not at all wonder to see such Fruits springing from the Principles of Self-Love: But that they should appear in a Man whom even the External shew of Honesty should have kept within bounds; least he should be Thought to imitate the Arrogance of those, who being bewitched with a Good Opinion of their own Learning, disdain and flout at all those that differ from them, that I have indeed something wondred at, and not I only, but even all the Honest and Modest part of the World also, when they have seen Doctors and Professors of all sorts, with relation to Things Sacred as well as Profane, whole Colledges, whole Nations, and even almost all the Divines of *Christendom*, when they contradict Mr. *Le Clerc*, to be in *Parrhasius's* Opinion no better than \* *Day-Labourers, Jackdaws, Chatter-Pyes, and Slaves, that they know not how to Reason*, that all that they aim at is only to defame him, to draw him from his Studies, to get themselves a Name, to help off the Sale of their own Books by his Answering them, who nevertheless, to punish them, will not answer them, and the like, which the greatest Impudence and the most unpolished Ignorance might well be ashamed of: But his Self-Love has not kept so close to this Method of Answering by Contumelious Thraasonisms or huffing Names, but that it has also sometimes betaken itself to the † Second and Third ways above-mentioned: Thus, to some *English Bishops*, whom he sooths, he uses Flattery; as also to the Celebrated *Witsius* whom he gently sooths by commending his || *Moderation and Equity*, in refusing of Mr. *Le Clerc* in the manner above-mentioned, to whose Censure he as tamely submits himself as little Lambs do to their Shearers: And with others again, he takes a third way, that is, he attacks them by his Impotent way of Vindicating himself and his Writings, as he has done with regard to the Celebrated Professor *Wayenus*, who altho' in his Excellent and Learned \* Dissertation he has not handled Mr. *Le Clerc* and his Errors more severely than *Witsius* did, yet he has given so different an Answer to it, and so full of Anger and Impotent Malice, that if I had not above, in relating the fourth Quality of Self-Love, shewn the Natural Cause of his Artificial and Political Diversity, the Readers would scarce believe their own Eyes. Finally, altho' in this last way of Answering more boldly, our Author would seem to descend to consider

\* *Parrhas.* p. 400, 405, 438  
— 441.

† *At the beginning of the special Remarks.*

|| *Parrhas.* p. 370.

\* *Wayen.*  
*Dissert. de λόγῳ. contr. Cleric præfix. Rittangelij. Libræ Veritatis.*

sider matters more particularly, he only does this in Appearance, and in a Sophistical Manner, picking and carping at this or that Trifle or Inconsiderable Circumstance, without so much as naming or touching upon the Substance of the Matter, but leaves the Principal Points and betakes himself to a Thousand shifts, which he applies with all the Fraud and Ill Nature that he can, as is shewn in a certain Anonymous *French Letter*, published in vindication of *Wayenus* against *Parrhasius*, the substance thereof is briefly contained in the following Lines: (a) *Parrhasius answers to nothing; he attacks nothing in particular: He knows not what to complain of; and when he himself most evidently belches out all that Gall which he reproaches others with, he only seeks to cast dust in the Eyes of his Readers, and to deafen and disturb them by certain general words, and by Calumnies which he cannot prove, just as if he could Transfuse his Gall into his Readers meerly by exposing the same to their Eyes; and consequently persuade them upon his Credit to believe all the Ill of others, which he accuses them of in his Writings,—but does not prove. And yet Parrhasius pretends, but very Ridiculously, in the Preface to his Second Tome, that by such Specimens of Answers he has justly acquired a right of holding his Tongue for the future; as if indeed without any Specimen of Sophistry, one had not always a right to refrain from publishing Lies!*

(a) Lettre de M. N. a un de ses amis sur les Parrhasiana, pour M. Vander Wayen, p. 96.

(26.) Of Parrhasius's other boastings, That he will not Answer.

(26.) As to what follows to the end of the Censure, seeing they are of the same Nature with the foregoing, and contain rather personal Reflexions, in vindicating whereof the Reader would find but little Profit, I shall not insist upon them as I have done upon Things of more solid use. He thinks Men don't see through the mask, when he boasts that he will not Answer others, *That he has no mind to enter the Lists with them, &c.* But they Laugh at all this pretended Assurance, had the Question been about External, Historical or Critical Niceties, wherein Mr. *Le Clerc* is allowed to be pretty well versed, his boasted Confidence might be bore with: But seeing the Controversy is about Things Spiritual and Divine, with regard to which he is wholly Blind; there is no room here for his boasting, nor is he capable of forming a right Judgment of them.

(27.) That others would make themselves

(27.) And the Readers will also laugh to hear known by Quarrelling with him.

the necessary Defence of the Truth, against his Errors, called by him *the seeking of Quarrels* with him, in order to make my self more known to the World,

(28.) And also, *To make my Books sell, which no body reads.* Here Parrhasius manifestly confounds the World of Men in his own Brain, with the World of Men in *Rerum Natura*. In that no body either buys or reads my Books : In this, the several Editions and Translations of my Books into other Languages, and the Testimony of many Authors that daily commend them, evidently shews the contrary. But Parrhasius who could wish that no body would read such Books as detect his or Mr. Le Clerc's Errors, in order to bring them into Contempt as unworthy of being read, he draws an Argument from the imaginary Ideas of his own Brain to the Real Existence of Things themselves. A New and Ridiculous kind of Falacy ! But seeing Parrhasius cannot but know that more than one of Mr. Le Clerc's own Books have been condemned to the worst uses of waste Paper, and that others have in several places been prohibited as hurtful and unworthy of being Read, I wonder he would not be more modest and circumspect as to this sort of Reproach.

(28.) And would also promote the Sale of their Books.

(29.) This counterfeit Appearance of a Mind secure of its own Cause, can only impose upon Children ; he consents that my Letter be compared with the Things that I therein oppose (or maintain against him) and that *without any other Answer* of Mr. Le Clerc. Let the Readers do so ; and then I doubt not but they will be amazed to see the incredible Assurance of a Man, whose Errors and Disingenuity are detected as clear as Noon-day.

(29.) His pretended Security as to his own Cause.

(30.) And yet in this shew of confidence there appears no small Evidence of his fear : For fearing, least the Readers, to his Condemnation and Dishonour, should take that liberty of Reading which he granted them, he at the same time tells them that *even the superfluity of time spent in reading my Letter is only losing so much time.* How candidly does Parrhasius prepare his Readers to look into the Arguments of both sides, as becomes equitable Judges, without Prejudice or Affection to one more than the other ! But (if I may take the liberty to speak a little boldly of such a Despiser) even in that Letter to Mr. Le Clerc there is more profit for a Soul that seeks to make a real Progress in solid Erudition, than in

(30.) And yet he draws his Readers off from reading those things that are published against him.



all Mr. *Le Clerc's* Books taken together, as being unworthy of a Christian, and of a contagious Nature, and consequently such as cannot be read without loss of time and detriment to the Readers; and that it may not be thought that I say this out of Prejudice, I shall here produce Mr. *Le Clerc's* own Testimony in confirmation thereof.

Though his own Writings, by his own Confession, cannot be read without loss of time.

He therefore speaks thus in the Preface prefixed to his French Translation of the New Testament, about the beginning. *If I must speak the Truth, I am so tired of all the Labours (that differ from the Sacred) to which the condition of human Affairs often call learned Men even against their Will, that my Pen has a thousand times dropt out of my hand when I have been employed about them, and I have said silently to my self: When will that happy Day come, when we shall do nothing any more unworthy of that excellent Nature that God has given us, and of those Promises that he has given us in the Gospel? When shall we leave off to study Languages and the Opinions of Men, and to read both the Chimerical Notions that they have left us, and the nauseous Histories of their Dissolute Morals and evil Actions? how long shall we see the Sun rise and set upon such labours of ours as we shall be ashamed of when that light shall appear that will never set again? When shall our Employments be of such a Nature, as that we shall have no cause to repent of them?* You see here that Mr. *Le Clerc* in express words acknowledges that most of his own Labours, and consequently of his Books, are unworthy of a Man, whether we consider him in his own excellent Nature, or as he stands in relation to God and his Gospel. That his Studies are lamentable Occupations of the Soul about Languages and the Opinions of vain Men, about their Chimerical Thoughts and the offensive Stories of their Villanies: And finally, that all those his Labours are such as he must in the last Day be ashamed and repent of; and consequently, that all his Labours and Books cannot be read without LOSS of TIME, is what our Author himself expressly acknowledges; but I wish he was sincere in it and that he would not immediately after commend, as he yet (a) continues to do daily, the impure and profane compositions of *Catullus*, *Terence*, *Theocritus*, and the like, which he highly extols, and even Promises to publish a new, in order to occasion the waste of more time and to do more mischief to Souls (to use his own words) which we must be ashamed and re-

(a) Vid. Bibl. Choisie. Tom. III, IV, VI, VII, &c.

pent

pent of when that Light shall appear that will never set, when far from Shame or Repentance, the Salutary Labours of the Misticks, which those Mockers called Fanatical, and exclaimed against as Chimeras and Fooleries, and as Mispending the time, and all those that have seriously given themselves to the Study of them, shall appear with Joy before the Divine Tribunal, and shall be like a Tree planted by the Water-side, that will bring forth his Fruit (the Fruit of Eternal Salvation and Glory) in due Season; and his Leaf shall not wither, and whatsoever he shall do (and does) it shall prosper. As for the ungodly, it is not so with them; but they shall be like the Chaff, which the Wind scattereth away from the Face of the Earth. Therefore the ungodly shall not be able to stand in the Judgment; neither the sinners in the Congregation of the Righteous. But the Lord knoweth and loveth the way of the Righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall Perish. Psalm i.

(31.) There remain yet two Places in the *Parrhasiana* against me, which, seeing he only according to custom attacks me with Reproaches instead of Reasons, I shall transiently touch upon, so far as what I have to say may be of use to the Reader. The Learned *Wayenus*, in his Dissertation against Mr. Le Clerc, quotes me in several Places thereof with commendation. *Parrhasius* being galled at this, (a) supposes a Case wherein *Wayenus* and I may differ; and then he puts in his Mouth the Reproach of a most obscure Lurker against me, which *Parrhasius* himself durst not directly charge upon me. What may not by this Artifice be said against Mr. Le Clerc, not excepting the Expressions of *Peter* against *Simon*, of *Paul* against *Elymas*, of *John* against *Cerintus*, and of *Polycarp* against *Marcion*, if one would suppose him to have been alive and meet them at that time? and this I only mention to shame such a Slanderer, and not that I intend to use the like Artifice against him. But *Parrhasius* is mistaken in this Conjecture of his, when he thinks that *Wayenus* would use such bitter Reproaches, upon the bare Account of differing from him in some Things. That Learned Person knew very well, even before he praised me, wherein I differed from him, and yet he praised me nevertheless; because he knew that we are obliged to bear with such Opinions as are only Accessories and not Fundamental, when otherwise those that hold them retain the solid

(31.) Why  
*Wayenus*  
writ against  
Mr. Le Clerc,  
and not against  
me.

(a) Parrh. p.  
434.

FOUNDATION of Christianity in true Faith, viz. JESUS CHRIST, *The Eternal Word of the Father which is made Flesh*, God manifest in the *Flesh*, to cleanse us from sin and to restore us to the Government of the Holy Spirit, and consequently to the Father and to Life Eternal, when we shall partake of those Benefits, and of the Benefactor and worker of our Salvation by FAITH, whereby on our part we shall be enabled to resign our Hearts and Understandings, and all the Faculties of our Souls to God in Christ; and on the part of God to receive his Divine and Amorous Light, and by the help thereof to know and embrace things Divine and Eternal, and all the means to them, not Ideally, but Really and Solidly. Now this Fundamental Principle he has acknowledged in me: And could he have perceived the same in Mr. Le Clerc, he would undoubtedly have praised him also, and what other Errors he might have observed in him, not destructive of this Fundamental Doctrine, he would have bore with charitably. But how could he acknowledge this Fundamental of the Christian Religion, this substantial Part thereof in a Man who (a) calls these Things and the like, *empty Speculations, and Fanaticism in general*?

(a) Parr. Ib.

(32.) Mr. Le Clerc's Reasons why so many oppose him, exposed and refuted.

(b) Parrh. p. 437, 438.

(32.) The other Place does not so directly regard me, as all those that any where oppose Mr. Le Clerc. Parrhasius fearing least from such a general opposition against Mr. Le Clerc it should be thought that he had given great cause for the same, and therefore that he is not without fault; in order to remove this Prejudice he brings (b) Three or Four Shadows of Reasons, which are all Fallacious, and in one of them he introduces me, which in Truth makes against himself. The last of them must certainly be laughed at; for he says, that the Reason why so many every where are against him, is because they cannot brook to see his Writings so universally esteemed by others. Again! the First and Third pretend, That certain Divines cannot without anger endure to see one that does not agree with them in all things; but that Mr. Le Clerc has written so many Things, that 'tis impossible but that he must differ from them in some things; but the Charge against him is not that he differs from others about some things promiscuously, but what all object against him is, That he differs from the rest of the Christian World as to Fundamentals by reason of his Pelagian Principles and Tennets:



Tennets: And is not this a good Reason why they should all oppose him in earnest? The Second Reason that *Parrhasius* gives why he ought not to be suspected, because of the many Adversaries in all Parts of the Christian World, is this: That the number of Censurers and Testimonies against him in any Society of Christians, ought to be considered but as one Censurer and Testimony in every Society. And the Reason he gives for this, is this; because they are all *Jack-Daws* or *Chatter Pies*, that have all one Note, that is, one and the same System, which they are not allowed to examine freely, and which they are obliged to follow under all those Penalties, that may be inflicted upon such Ecclesiasticks as change their Opinions. But from hence 'tis plain that he excepts me, as one who lives in no one Society; and consequently, who am neither a Chatter Pye, nor a Jack-Daw, nor obliged to stick close to any vulgar Note or System; but as one that is at liberty to examine all things without any fear, and to differ from others. Now from hence it most evidently follows, that my Testimony, in a thing wherein I oppose him in common with all the rest, cannot be eluded by him, as he does that of others, who he says talk after one another like *Jack-Daws* and *Chatter Pies* and *Slaves*; but that it ought to be considered as coming from a Mind void of all Prejudices and Party Considerations; and that therefore it ought to carry some weight with honest well-meaning Men. And thus *Parrhasius* himself destroys his own or Mr. *Le Clerc's* Argument. But seeing he is a Scoffer, he endeavours to save the matter by this ridiculous and petulant Assertion; namely, That I abuse the same Liberty to propagate and defend any kind of Dreams or Fancies. But what I pray is this ridiculous Sophism to the Purpose? We don't now speak of my private Opinions, nor of their Qualities, as I may so say; but the Question is about Mr. *Le Clerc's* Opinions, whether according to the general Testimony of all Men about them, we have not reason to suspect that they tend to promote the Interests of *Socinianism*?

It is worth the while to detect the chief Fallacy that *Parrhasius* makes use of here, to remove the Suspicion of blame from Mr. *Le Clerc*, and to justify the Appellations that he bestows upon his Adversaries, as a parcel of *Chatter Pies* and *Jack Daws*, tied up to one Note only, and utterly deprived of the liberty of

Examina-

*Examination* : When yet these, as to this matter, are perfectly in the right, and Mr. *Le Clerc* himself is the only Person that deserves to be blamed.

It must be observed then, that the Question between Mr. *Le Clerc* and his Adversaries is of a two-fold Nature; the first is a Question of *Right*, (as they call it) *viz.* Whether his Opinions as published in his Books, are consonant to Truth, and whether the Reasons that he gives be valid and rightly deduced from sound Principles; the other is a Question as to the *Fact*; *viz.* Whether his Opinions and Doctrine be the same with the Opinions and Doctrine of the *Socinians*, without having any regard to the Truth or Falsity of them as such. Some have taken the first way of Disputing with Mr. *Le Clerc*; and those that have taken this Method have not refuted him from the Principles peculiar to their own Sect or Society; but from such Principles as they hold in common with all Parties or Societies of Christians, the *Socinians* excepted: Whence it follows that it is both false and unjust to compare them to *Jack-Daws*, who from a System peculiar to their own Party, join in one cry against Mr. *Le Clerc*, that his Opinions are false, impious and profane, &c. But as to the matter of Fact, whether Mr. *Le Clerc*'s Doctrine be the same with that of the *Socinians*, there are many, among also are those of whom *Parthasius* here complains, that make such a Question. Now for any one to be admitted as a proper Witness or Judge in this matter, 'tis enough that he knows and understands what the *Socinians* Teach, what Mr. *Le Clerc* has written, and to state the Question right with relation to their Doctrine, and then to judge, whether the State of the Question be the same on both sides or not. Now 'tis evident that none ought to be denied the liberty of forming such a Judgment, because that he espouses another System which condemns that Doctrine as false; for the Question here is not about the Truth or Falsity thereof; but about the Identity or Diversion of the Doctrine, true or false, which every one has full liberty to affirm or deny, let him hold what System he will himself, without being restrained by the fear of any Punishment.

Let us give an instance of this kind. Let us suppose, *v.g.* That the *Arian* Doctrine is condemned (as indeed it is) as false by all the Systems of Christians, and also, if you please, that every one has free liberty  
to

to condemn it. This surely does not in the least hinder but that some of old did, and others now a days do take the liberty to judge whether the Doctrine, v. g. of *Eusebius* of *Cesarea* be the same with the *Arian* Doctrine or not: And we see that in Fact among Christians that unanimously reject *Arianism*, many have and still do openly take this liberty, some thinking that *Eusebius's* Doctrine is *Arian*, and others not. Now if in this matter all, or the greatest part agreed, he might justly be suspected of an Error, or thought Innocent, according to the Opinion of his Judges, provided they themselves knew perfectly what the Doctrine of *Arius* was; and also understood *Eusebius's* words, and the Equivocations, if any such should be found occurring in his Works.

The Question is whether his Doctrine, scattered every where throughout his Books, be the same with the Doctrine of the *Socinians* or not? *Parrhasius* very absurdly and unjustly refuses to admit those as Witnesses or Judges in this Case, who embrace any System contrary to that of the *Socinians*; for this does by no means destroy the Liberty of Judging, whether any Doctrine be of the *Socinian* kind or not: And every one may be a proper Judge here, provided he have these two Qualifications. 1. If he have a true Idea of the Doctrine of the *Socinians*. 2. If they Read and Understand what Mr. *Le Clerc* has published. They will be qualified as to the first point, if they know. 1. That the Capital Error, and the first and only Foundation of *Socinianism* is *Pelagianism*; That is, the Denial as well of our own Corruption, and Mortal Sicknels, as of the Medicine itself, viz. The Grace of God, operating Inwardly in us by the Effusion of his Light and Love, the worker and finisher of our Salvation. 2. That the chief Branch or Member of this Evil Root, is the asserting the Power of Reason (as 'tis Corrupt and Blind, and without being renewed by the Grace of God) and that even as to Divine Things, all which it would represent by its own superficial and imperfect Ideas, and subject them to its own Examination and Judgment (however dark and corrupt) together with all the Mysteries of the Christian Religion, and the Sense and Interpretation of the Scriptures themselves. 3. Hence flow like so many Corollaries or particular Consequences (and not as the Principal Point of the Matter) the Rejection of those Mysteries which Corrupt Reason does not comprehend.



viz. The Blessed Trinity, the Divinity of *Jesus Christ*, the Incarnation of the Word, the Divinity also of the Holy Spirit, and his dwelling and inward Operations in us. 4. That they use Equivocal Expressions, that is, that they impose another meaning upon Words, than what is common and natural; to wit, thus they allow, that *Jesus Christ is the true God*, that is, that he is truly made and constituted so: That *in him is the Eternal Divinity*, yea, that *the Eternal Divinity of Christ created the World, &c.* That is, that the Nature and Essence of *Jesus Christ* is indeed a mere Creature; but that to that Creature there is added as a certain External Adjunct, the Eternal Divinity of the Father, which Divinity of the Father may therefore be now called the Eternal Divinity of *Christ*, which therefore Created the World, and is that of which all the Divine Attributes ascribed to *Christ* in Scripture, must be predicated &c. and such like Artifices. They will have the other Qualification, if they read Mr. *Le Clerc's* own Books, as well those that *Parrhasius* mentions, as those that he omits, especially *Liberius*, of which mention has been made \* above, the greatest part whereof is copied into his Notes upon his *French New Testament*, not to mention other Anonymous Books, whereof 'tis said he is the Author, and which the stile confirms to be his, wherein the Orthodox are attacked under the Notion of having espoused *Platonism*; and the *Socinians* are defended under the Names of Scripturists and Unitarians. But setting these aside, if from reading the former, and from innumerable places in them, the Readers of whatever Party shall not conclude that Mr. *Le Clerc's* Doctrine is not the same with that of the *Socinians*, it must be acknowledged and confessed that he has been unjustly suspected of *Socinianism*: But if they all unanimously come to the same Conclusion, let *Parrhasius* harp as long as he pleases upon his *Jackdaws* and *Chatter-Pyes*, the Systems of particular Sects, and their having all but *one Note*; he can never impose upon Impartial Judges so far as to make them believe against all Right and the Laws of Reason, that the Learned Men of all Religions and Societies, would set aside their Private Differences and Animosities to agree together to condemn an Innocent Person, and whose Humane Learning they don't otherwise despise, against their Conscience, when to their Eternal Dishonour, such a Sentence might from his own Writings that are published

\* Remarks  
upon § 12 of  
the Censure.

lished, be easily proved to be false and nothing but the effect of mere Prejudice or Malice. *Parrhasius* had done more wisely had he held his Tongue altogether as to this matter, least possibly some of those *Chatter-Pyes*, or some Body else, think it worth their while to examine and discuss the matter more particularly, and to display the Truth openly before all Men, being at last tired to see himself and all the rest of Mankind so long mocked and huffed by a Man, who thinks himself so Wise and all the rest so Foolish, that he thinks he can persuade them that they don't see that which even a Blind Man may feel: Unless possibly some Body attempt the same Thing with a better design, viz. To prevent the seduction of many Souls from the way of salutary Truth: Which yet I had much rather should be effected by the Man's own Repentance and Amendment. And that he may do so, may the Spirit of God open Mr. *Le Clerc's* Eyes (who has at last owned himself to be the same with *Parrhasius* in more places than one of some of the Tomes of his *Bibliothèque*) and move and penetrate his Heart with Divine Fear! And this I heartily wish, and shall always pray for.

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**FINIS.**

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